METRO / A19
Belo's surgeon faces raps for botched tightening process

NEWS / A2
Interior Secretary Puno on 'health leave'; Palace names Ebdane OIC

NEWS / A4
Senate pulls out security of NBN-ZTE whistle-blower

WORLD / A22
Jackson's will gives custody of his 3 kids to his mother

TIM owner linked to clan close to GMA

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

THE TIES THAT BIND JOSE MARI ANtuñez to the Abaniz clan that is closely linked to the First Family and his bid to gain control of the electronic voting system are threatening to torpedo next year's automated elections, a leftist lawmaker said yesterday.

As the Commission on Elections (Comelec) attempted to salvage the unraveling joint venture between Smartmatic International and its local partner Total

TIM OWNER, A6

Thousands of jobs await Filipinos in Guam, Japan

THOUSANDS OF FILIPINO WORKERS could be hired in the construction of new military bases on the US territory of Guam, the island's governor said during a visit to the Philippines.

Jobs also beckon in Japan, which is looking not only for Filipino health workers but also engineers, information technology

THOUSANDS, A8

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS
Thursday, July 2, 2009 ◆ Vol. 24 / No. 204

TIM head denies ties to FG

CALL TO PRAYER The Sto. Niño de Paz Chapel at the Greenbelt 5 Park, Makati, is filled to overflowing on Wednesday, the first day of the nine-day novena of healing Masses offered for former President Cory Aquino, who's ailing with colon cancer. The country's first woman President reportedly improved at press time last night and was moved from the ICU to a regular room. Inset photo was taken on Aug. 17, 2008, at the Arasoc chapel in Quezon City. BEN CAYSIDO

Cory in serious condition; kin, friends pray

THE CANCER-STRICKEN CORAZON Aquino has been moved from the intensive care unit to a regular room of Makati Medical Center and has refused to undergo another cycle of chemotherapy, her spokesperson Deedee Siytangco said last night.

In an earlier phone interview at 6:20 p.m., Siytangco said the former President, who is battling colon cancer, had been confined at the hospital for a week and a half because of loss of appetite, but was conscious.

"Her whole family is with her now. She's in serious condition but we're hoping for the best," Siytangco said.

There was no word from actress and TV host Kris Aquino, the former President's youngest daughter and for a time the family spokesperson on her mother's condition.

Kris' manager and longtime friend Boy Abunda said she was weeping and inconsolable. "Iyak siya nang iyak," he said.

Abunda said he spoke with Kris by phone at around 6 p.m. yesterday.

CORY, A8

Antuñez: I didn't ask for P500M

By Doris C. Dumlao

JOSE MARI ANTUÑEZ, THE head of local IT provider Total Information Management Corp. (TIM), yesterday denied he had demanded P500 million for next year's election computerization program, or that he was close to President Macapagal-Arroyo's husband, Jose Miguel Arroyo.

"The first and only time that I met the First Gentleman in person or ever spoke to him was in 1994 during the blessing of TIM's business recovery service center," Antuñez said in a brief interview.

He said that Mr. Arroyo, who was then a senator, did the ribbon-cutting during the occasion.

Antuñez brushed aside Makati Rep. Teodoro Locsin's claim that he had demanded half a billion pesos from TIM's foreign partner, Smartmatic International Corp., to proceed with a joint venture agreement and allow the bid the consortium won to move forward and sign a formal contract with the Commission on Elections (Comelec).

"It's absolutely not true. We didn't ask for anything," he said.

Antuñez declined further comment in deference to a Comelec request that the two companies refrain from making public statements while their differences were being sorted out.

The Comelec has given the two par-

TIM-MAKI, A6

Whistle-blower says gov't behind bombings

By Christine O. Avendaño and Edwin C. Tandoc Jr.

ONLY THE GOVERNMENT CAN BE behind the recent bombing incidents in the country, a witness in the 2005 "Hello Garci" election fraud scandal said yesterday.

Speaking with Senate reporters, Vidal Doble recalled that when he was working with the Intelligence Service of the Armed Forces, he and other military intelligence officers frequently did the bombings themselves.

"We did that so we could focus on the scenario that they (authorities) wanted to pull off," he said.

Doble said this was why he was inclined to believe reports on the so-called "Djakarta Anggot Moon," which would purportedly see the installation of administration-friendly police and military brass in sensitive posts to allow for Charter change and ultimately the extension of President Macapagal-Arroyo's stay in power.

"They want to control the whole of the AFP just in case the Con-ass (constituent assembly) pushes ahead," Doble said, adding:

"It's the government that's behind

WHISTLE-BLOWER, A6

Remember 'Hello Garci'? He's all for automation

By Michael Lim Ubac

TAKE IT FROM GARCI.

Former Election Commissioner Virgilio Garcillano yesterday threw his support behind election automation, saying it will be best for governments to go ahead with computerized polls next year.

Garcillano said the Commission on Elections (Comelec) should ensure the holding of the first-ever nationwide poll automation in May 2010 because it would be in the country's interest.

He said the automated system would speed up the counting of votes and proclamation of winners, and eliminate protracted election protests.

At the height of the "Hello Garci"

REMEMBER, A6

New Honduras leader defies int'l pressure

TEGUCIGALPA, HONDURAS—IN THE face of growing international pressure, the interim leader of Honduras has warned that only a foreign invasion would return President Manuel Zelaya to office, setting up a showdown with his ousted predecessor who is preparing to come home accompanied by world leaders.

The Organization of American States (OAS) on Wednesday set a 72-hour deadline for the interim Honduran government to end the crisis, as the 34-member bloc joined the UN General Assembly, United States and other countries in condemning the military coup that ousted Zelaya.

Honduran troops stationed the presi-

NEW HONDURAS, A2

Jackson's last journey to Neverland

ENDLESS TRIBUTES Four editions of a special tribute issue to the King of Pop will be out in the United States on Friday.

LOS ANGELES—THE "THRILLER" FOR all time who battled insomnia and begged for sedatives in his final days may be laid to eternal rest in Neverland.

Michael Jackson's body will make a poignant final journey to Neverland Ranch, fueling speculations that the sprawling fantasy retreat could become a permanent shrine and resting place for the tragic pop icon.

A 30-car motorcade reportedly plans to escort the body on Thursday to the King of Pop's 1,050-hectare estate, a monument to Jackson's obsession with childhood that once included a fairground and a private zoo.

CNN and the celebrity news website TMZ.com on Tuesday said the Jackson family planned a public viewing on Friday—which could draw a crush of fans to the isolated ranch north of Los Angeles.

Friday's public viewing could be an

NEVER MORE A wreath of white roses hangs on the front gate of Jackson's beloved Neverland, his 1,050-hectare fantasy estate in Los Olivos, California. AP

indications that the Jackson family has permanent plans for Neverland, where a flurry of vehicles, heavy construction equipment and workers were spotted on Tuesday.

These included a dozen vehicles, including a tractor, a cement mixer and a

JACKSON, A9

WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: Palawan, Visayas and Mindanao will have mostly cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers and thunderstorms. The rest of the country will have partly cloudy to cloudy skies with isolated rain showers or thunderstorms mainly in the afternoon or evening.

Metro Manila	Partly cloudy	Kalibo/Boracay	Mostly cloudy
Baguio	Partly cloudy	Iloilo	Mostly cloudy
Tuguegarao	Partly cloudy	Cebu	Mostly cloudy
Laoag	Partly cloudy	Tacloban	Mostly cloudy
Clark Zone	Partly cloudy	Ilo-Ilo/Bacolod	Mostly cloudy
Legazpi	Partly cloudy	Cagayan de Oro	Mostly cloudy
Catarman	Partly cloudy	Davao	Mostly cloudy

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Palace orders probe of Fil-Am's torture

By Christine F. Esguerra and Cynthia D. Rubio

MALACAÑANG HAS ORDERED AN INVESTIGATION into the allegation that Filipino-American activist Melissa Roxas had been abducted and tortured by suspected military agents last month.

Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita, who also heads the Presidential Human Rights Committee, yesterday acknowledged that the accusation was a blow to the foreign administration's effort to improve its human rights record, adding that he requested Defense Secretary Gilbert Teodoro to conduct an inquiry.

Foreign Affairs Undersecretary for Special Concerns Rafael Seguis said the case was already being investigated by the Department of Justice and that expedition for a writ of amparo was being addressed by the Supreme Court.

The petition is a remedy available to any person whose right to life, liberty and security is violated or threatened with violation by an unlawful act or omission of a public official or employee, or of a private individual or entity. It covers extrajudicial killings and enforced disappearances or threats.

Under UN scrutiny

Ermita conceded that Roxas' allegations would again be "registered" before the United Nations Human Rights Council. The government has been under scrutiny from the international body for the spate of extrajudicial killings and forced disappearances since President Macapagal-Arroyo came to power in 2001.

"I want to know if the allegations really happened," Ermita said, adding that information from the defense department described Roxas as a member of an organization "critical of the administration and the Armed Forces."

Roxas, 35, allegedly experienced violations of human rights first-hand when she came to the country for a brief "exposure trip."

A member of the US chapter of the leftist Bagong Alyansang Makabayan (Bayan), she was reported missing on May 19 and surfaced seven days later. She hurriedly flew back to the US where she later recounted her ordeal in a press conference.

Blind-folded, handcuffed

Roxas said she and two companions—Arlie Edward Jacobo and Jeanette Gandino—were abducted by 15 men believed to be soldiers on May 19 in La Paz, Tarlac province, blindfolded and handcuffed and brought to what she believed was Fort Magsaysay, a military camp in Nueva Ecija.

According to Roxas, she was beaten up several times despite her pleas to talk to her lawyer. One of her captors also tried to suffocate her by pulling two plastic bags over her head, she said.

"I knew it was the military that had me," she said. "They said I was a member of the New People's Army and made me sign some documents, but I refused. I told them I was a writer and Bonbi care volunteer. I want the world to know what happened because the Philippine government and military should not get away with what they did," she said.

US inquiry

Meanwhile, Rebecca Thompson, spokesperson of the US Embassy in Manila said in a text message that they had asked the government to provide details on the incident as it involved an American citizen.

"We take seriously the safety and security of American citizens and are seeking further information about this case," she said.

Armed Forces spokesperson Lt. Col. Romeo Brawner Jr. has denied military involvement in the incident, saying an internal inquiry showed the 7th Infantry Division in Tarlac, where the incident allegedly happened, had nothing to do with it.

RONALDO PUNO

Puno on sick leave—Palace; but he's not sick, says aide

By TJ Burgonio

INTERIOR SECRETARY RONALDO PUNO has quietly flown to the United States but his department has released contradictory accounts as to the real reason for the trip.

Malacañang announced yesterday that Puno had gone on "health leave" and that Public Works Secretary Hermogenes Ebdane Jr. had been named officer in charge of Puno's department.

The Department of Interior and Local Government, however, clarified that Puno wasn't ill, and went to leave to attend his daughter's wedding in the United States.

"My information is that he leave is up to July 12 and that he will have a checkup on his heart," Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita told reporters in a briefing.

Presidential Management Secretary Julia Abad declined to comment on the issue of Puno's leave of absence. Puno took a leave to undergo physical checkup in the US, Ermita said.

"The President ordered that there should be an overseas and that it should be a cabinet Secretary," he said.

Puno had earlier indicated he would attend the wedding of his daughter in the US.

Interior Undersecretary Rico Puno said Malacañang expected Puno, who has declared his plan to take a crack at the vice presidency in the May 2010 national elections, to return to his job after his leave.

"Definitely," he said when asked if Puno was going back to the DILG. "We all you know, the reason why he left is due to health, he got heart blocks. He's preparing for a political exercise."

Puno had declared he would seek the reinstatement of the Lakas Kampi CMD nationalist party for his planned vice presidential run.

At the DILG, an official said that Puno would attend a family affair in the US.

Interior assistant Secretary Rebal Verzosa said a very healthy Puno left Manila for the US on June 27 to witness his daughter Tutel's wedding on July 4 in San Francisco, California.

Puno's seven children grew up in the US and already have their own families there.

"There is no health reason for it. In fact, right now, he's having dinner with his family," said Tenmoan, speaking by phone from Los Angeles.

"You saw how he was when he visited [the hospital]. He was even drinking wine," Tenmoan said, referring to Puno's roughly three-hour visit at the hospice office on June 23, just four days before he flew to the US.

Verzosa said it was Ermita himself who signed Puno's leave request, but he could not say why the Palace official cited health reasons for the latter's absence. *With a report from Sara Quimosing*

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RP flu cases now 1,709 and counting

THE NUMBER OF CONFIRMED A(H1N1) cases in the country almost doubled in the past week, from 861 reported by the Department of Health on Friday to 1,709 cases tallied as of yesterday.

Health officials indicated the number "has yet to peak."

Health Undersecretary Mario Villaverde assuaged the public with a report that 1,603 of the total number of cases tallied from the first week of May to June 27 have already recovered.

Metro Manila appears to be the hardest hit by the A(H1N1) spread, accounting for 1,325 confirmed cases.

Southern Tagalog follows with 231 cases and Central Luzon with 117.

Cagayan Valley and the Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao are the only remaining A(H1N1)-free regions in the country.

"I cannot say if we have peaked but I think the cases will still increase," Villaverde said in a press conference yesterday afternoon.

Villaverde said Health Secretary Francisco Duque III met with DOH regional directors, the chiefs of hospitals and the task force on A(H1N1) on Tuesday to firm up the government's mitigation strategies.

Surge seen

"We have to prepare for a surge in mild cases," Villaverde said.

He said mitigation strategies centered on making sure the health care system could accommodate the A(H1N1) cases who need medical treatment.

During the DOH command conference on Tuesday, Duque ordered the activation of community health response teams and the preparation of hospitals, health centers and private clinics for the expected increase in A(H1N1) cases.

"As we anticipate more cases in the coming months, we must institute effective mitigation measures to prevent disaster and reduce the impact of the pandemic on our nation and the economy," Duque said in a statement.

Villaverde said that seventeen of the cases was a factor in the expected increase in cases.

"Globally, people have yet to develop immunity because the virus is still new," Villaverde said.

Health officials continued to stress the mild nature of the virus.

Those who are advised to seek immediate medical attention are high-risk persons who develop flu-like symptoms. They include those with pre-existing medical conditions such as asthma, diabetes, cardiovascular disease, HIV, pregnant women, infants and the elderly.

Those who are not high-risk persons but develop flu-like symptoms are urged to stay at home and manage their symptoms.

On quarantine, GMA didn't just doodle

By TJ Burgonio

PRESIDENT MACAPAGAL-ARROYO didn't just doodle/run mindlessly out of her time while on quarantine at the Asian Hospital in Muntinlupa City, as she could but be one day.

Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita said yesterday that Ms Arroyo brought with her appointment papers and copies of executive orders she needed to sign during her self-imposed quarantine.

"Don't expect the President to just watch television," he told reporters in a briefing.

"It has been her habit, whether she is in the Asian Hospital or not, to bring along papers that need to be attended to, as far as she is concerned, everything is normal."

"She [President is well. She checked in last night (Tuesday night). She is doing paper work and it is much with Cabinet members and other officials by phone," added Press Secretary Cerge Remonde.

Ms Arroyo decided to be quarantined at the Asian Hospital on Sunday, a day after arriving from a 13-day swing through Japan, Brunei, Colombia and Hong Kong.

This was in response to calls for her to isolate herself against the influenza A(H1N1) virus that has killed nine and infected over 500 others in the country.

The President has already canceled her itinerary this week and designated Ermita to represent her in official engagements.

Ermita said he expected Ms Arroyo to check out of the hospital after a day.

PIA denies promoting candidates in ads

By Tina G. Santos

THE PHILIPPINE INFORMATION Agency (PIA) yesterday denied that it was promoting the political candidacies of government officials, contrary to recent slew of print and television advertisements were merely informing the public about government programs.

Jose Mateo, executive assistant to PIA director Conrado Limcaoco, justified the agency's advertising practice during a court hearing on a suit to stop the use of public funds for political campaign purposes.

The taxpayers suit was filed by lawyer Ernesto Francisco who charged that the ads, while purporting to promote the functions and activities of government, "in reality, are clear political campaign designed as infomercials."

He asked the court to issue a writ of preliminary injunction or restraining order to prevent incumbent executive from further appropriating public funds to promote themselves. He also asked the court to order the officials concerned to pay back the money they used.

Cabral for senator? Count me out, says DSWD chief

SOCIAL WELFARE SECRETARY Esperanza Cabral has categorically declared that she has no intention of running for senator in 2010 contrary to reports saying that she was one of the administration's potential candidates.

"I am happy serving the public in this capacity as secretary of the Department of Social Welfare and Development," she said on Tuesday.

Malacañang aides have named Cabral as among the administration's potential candidates next year.

Cabral said she also has received offers to join the senatorial lineup of other political parties.

But she said she politely declined the offers. "I don't feel that I am up to it," she said.

Cabral called a press conference yesterday noon after she arrived on Saturday from the President Macapagal-Arroyo's visit to Japan and Brazil.

"I already feel tired just thinking of how tedious campaigning would be," she said.

Edson C. Tandoc Jr.

CABRAL

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DSWD seeks ₱25-B hike in 2010 budget

THE DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL WELFARE and Development (DSWD) has asked for a more than 100-percent increase in its 2010 budget, saying that a huge chunk of it would go to "better social protection services" for poor Filipinos.

The DSWD is asking for a P25-billion budget for 2010, a 142.27-percent increase from the P10.45-billion that it got this year.

Secretary Esperanza Cabral said a major portion, or P25 billion, in the proposed budget has been "allotted for the poor and disadvantaged groups."

Cabral said the P25 billion will be used to implement the department's "big sister programs" for the poor, including the conditional cash transfer, or the Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino Program (4Ps); the Kapit-Bisig Laban sa Kahirapan-Comprehensive and Integrated Delivery of Social Services; Kapangyarihan at Kumilusan sa Barangay (Kalahi-CIDSS-KKB); and the Self Employment Assistance-Kaunlaran (SEA-K).

Also included are the National Household Targeting System for Poverty Reduction (NHTS-PR) project, International Social Welfare Services for Filipino Nationals (ISWSFN), "Mahusay na Simula, Timtim ng Bawat" project, Healthy Start Feeding program, Care Shelter Assistance Project, and the social pension program for the elderly.

The DSWD has allotted more than P1.5 billion to the proposed second phase of the Kalahi-CIDSS-KKB II, a program that allows residents themselves decide and implement the projects that are needed in their barangays like a potable water system.

Cabral said that the DSWD wants the Kalahi-CIDSS projects to be "fully implemented and institutionalized" in another 1,000 barangays in 36 municipalities by 2010.

The DSWD has also allocated P39 million for the SEA-K program to provide seed capital assistance to more than 16,000 families nationwide.

Patterned after the hugely successful Grameen Bank microlending system in Bangladesh, the SEA-K extends interest-free small loans to needy Filipinos who want to set up their own businesses. Nikko Dizon

DFA exec faces raps for faking school records

By Edson C. Tandoc Jr.

AN ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF THE Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) is facing charges of falsification of public documents filed by the Office of the Ombudsman for allegedly misdeclaring that she obtained a degree from the University of the Philippines College of Mass Communication (UP CMC).

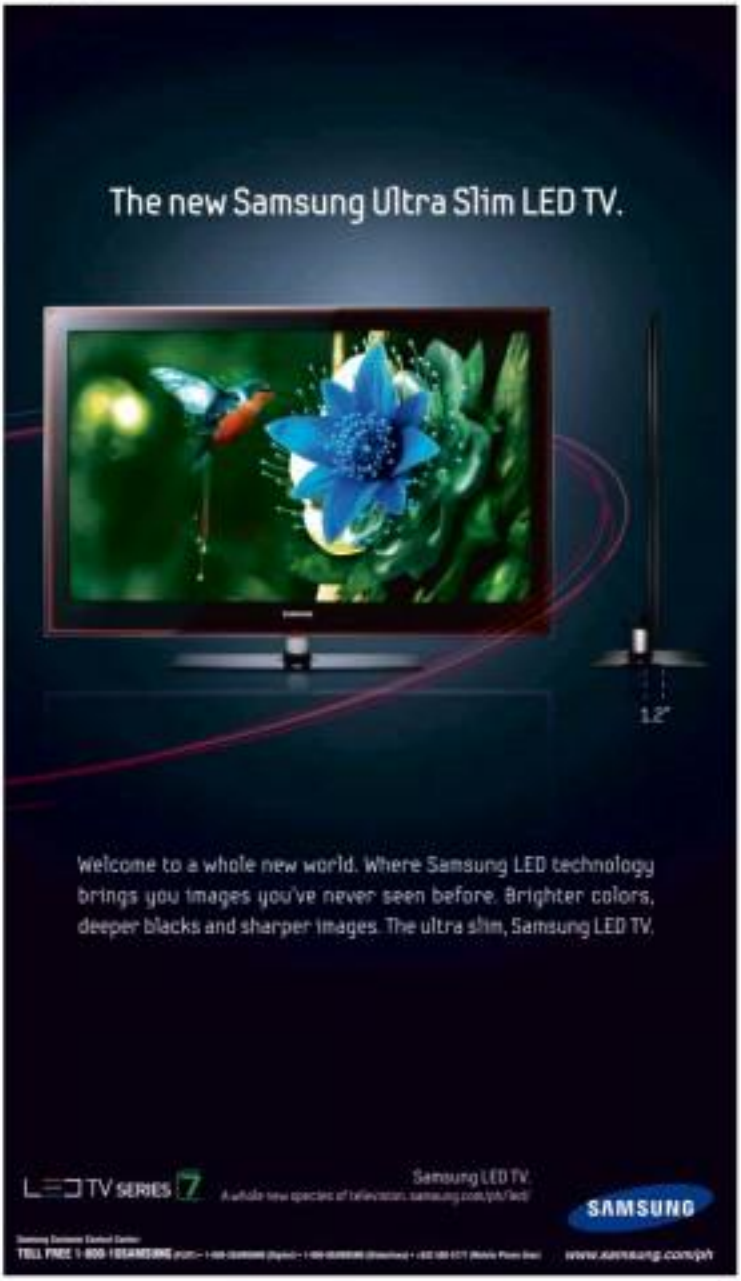
Assistant Secretary Ma. Lourdes-Ramiro Lopez, Chief of Mission to New York, declared in her Personal Data Sheet in October 2005 that she graduated with a Bachelor of Arts in Broadcast Communication degree from UP CMC in 1978, apart from earning units from Maryknoll College (now Miriam College) from 1964-1967.

However, the Office of the Ombudsman later discovered that Lopez was not a graduate of the state university, adding that she finished only 81 out of the 148 units required for the degree.

"Strong evidence shows that the respondent made an untruthful statement in her Personal Data Sheet," said the resolution recommending the filing of charges against Lopez.

In defending herself, Lopez sent a certification from the UP CMC stallholder her True Copy of Grades "because of return inadvertently entered."

The Office of the Ombudsman, however, said that despite her claim, "she still failed to overcome the affiant that she indeed earned a degree," and filed charges against the DFA official on June 29.



3 MILLIONTH SEEDLING
Minutes+ years after the first seedling was planted, Puerto Princesa City Mayor Edward S. Hagedorn and the "Pista Y Ang Kapuluan" (Feast of the Forest) reached a milestone last weekend with the planting of the 3 millionth seedling in the city's Iwahig watershed. He was assisted by the Netherlands' Ambassador to the Philippines, Robert Brinks, television personality Cory Quirino and Miss Earth hopefuls. The reforestation stretch also marked its 1 Pill year.

Suppliers trade barbs on DepEd noodles contract

By Philip C. Tubeza

THE CONTROVERSY OVER THE suspended P429-million noodle program of the Department of Education (DepEd) has turned into a word war between two competing bidders.

Yesterday, the company that won the contract, Jovenys Manufacturing Corp., scored bidding rival Robinsons Trading after the latter submitted that it had a foreign partner that was capable of supplying the noodles for the DepEd feeding program.

And Robinsons put in a few shots, saying that the contract should be rebidded and that Jovenys should be excluded.

"Robinsons has no qualms [about] submitting the products of its foreign principal and introducing this much needed dollar reserves of the Philippines," said Jovenys legal counsel and spokesperson Claro Benavidez, in a statement.

He made the statement after Robinsons said that, while it was just a trading company, it has a joint venture agreement with a big international noodle manufacturer that can supply the needs of the DepEd's feeding program. Robinsons made the statements in response to the remark of Education Secretary Jesli Lapus that it was not even qualified to bid for the noodle project.

BFAD supervision

A former officer of Robinsons, Dennis Quido, has filed corruption charges against Lapus in connection with the noodles contract.

"It must also be underscored that the exchanges [bribes] involving [...] still similarly be produced within the immediate vicinity places of DSE, under close and watchful supervision and monitoring by both DepEd and the Bureau of Food and Drugs (BFAD). This cannot happen if the noodles are imported like what Robinsons is proposing," he said.

Dimaculangan said the inspection by both DepEd and BFAD of "essential and vital" is not only to ensure that the noodles most government standards but also "to guarantee that the noodles are free from harmful additives like melamine or even formalin."

"It was widely reported in the recent past that imported food items manufactured in countries like China or even those closely connected with it like Vietnam were tainted with melamine or protein enhancer or formalin for longer shelf life. Noodles are included on the list of food items that the United States Food and Drug Administration have listed to contain the said deadly additives," Dimaculangan said.

Local vs foreign

He added that under the Government Procurement Reform Act, preserving entities like DepEd are specifically directed to "give preference to the purchase of domestically produced and manufactured goods, supplies and materials that meet the specified or desired quality."

"Quite clearly, the line favors local producers like JMC as opposed to foreign manufacturers," Dimaculangan said.

Robinsons, for its part, suggested that the bidding process be drastically revised and the contract rebidded to ensure transparency and fairness.

Quido, a former sales representative of Robinsons, said Jovenys should also be excluded from the new bidding since it had been charged with graft before the Ombudsman.

"The process must be revised to some doubts in the public's mind that they will rush this up," said Quido in an interview.

Open bidding

Lapus said that an "open bidding" would be held for the project, so that the school feeding program would still proceed before school year. He said he had met with industry players to review and provide inputs for the new bidding.

"The bids and awards committee should also be strengthened so that we would have new people there," Quido said.

He said that one of the secrets of effective and inquiries bidding is to supply packs of 100 grams of noodles should be required and lowered to just 50 grams so that more manufacturers would join the bidding.

"Most of our noodle competitors make packs of 55 grams. That is why packs of 50 grams is considered as the actual need of consumers as it should be lowered to 50 grams to invite more interested bidders," Quido said.

He said that despite Lapus' statement about having a new bidding, he was actually encouraged that DepEd would just revive its deal with Jovenys "since the noise has gone down."

Whistle-blowers lose Senate bodyguards

By Christine O. Avendaño

THE SENATE HAS CUT IN half the size of the security detail assigned to MRV-ZTE whistle-blower Jun Lozada and removed altogether the security protection provided to another whistle-blower, Rodolfo Mendoza.

Jose Balajadia, the chief of the Senate's sergeants at arms office, said the decision was made by Senate President Juan Ponce Enrile after conducting a security assessment.

Lozada had eight security people assigned to him while Mendoza had four.

Balajadia said that based on the assessment, the security attention of Lozada today was "different" from last year.

He did not say whether this meant the level of threat had lessened against Lozada who came forward with allegations of irregularities in the now aborted $329-million National Broadband Network contract awarded to China's ZTE Corp.

In the case of Mendoza, Balajadia said there were no longer any threats on the life of the other whistle-blower in the NBN-ZTE scandal.

Bodyguards for golf

Enrile conducted a review of the Senate security detail after confirming reports that Lozada has been playing golf with his security people in tow.

Recently, Mendoza went to Balajadia to ask why all his security personnel assigned to him were pulled out.

With him were two other whistle-blowers, Vidal Doble, and Jose "Boy" Ravelo. Doble was the former military intelligence agent responsible for wiretapping the alleged phone conversations between election official Virgilio Garcillano and what is believed to be President Macapagal-Arroyo, in what came to be known as the Hello Garci scandal of 2005.

Ravelo was one of the witnesses in the alleged P728-million Jueteban fund scam involving former agriculture undersecretary Jocelyn "Joc-Joc" Bolante.

Mendoza said he was surprised when he was told that there were no more threats on his life. He said that only two weeks ago, two motorcycle-riding men were eavesdropping in the yard of the Senate vehicle that he was riding in. A similar incident happened some two or three months ago, he said.

Blaming Lozada

Mendoza said he plans to appeal to Enrile as he was also worried for the safety of his seven children.

Doble said Lozada was partly to blame for what happened because of the latter's golfing escapades.

Doble and Ravelo are not being provided with any security protection by the Senate.

According to Doble, he did not need any security because being a former military person, he knew how to secure himself.

"If it's really your time to go, you won't do anything about it," he said.

Mendoza, Ravelo and Doble said they were "doing fine" because opposition Sen. Panfilo Lacson was helping them out financially.

Mendoza said he was surprised when he was told that there were no more threats on

Biometrics for Saudi visa seekers

SAUDI ARABIA WILL BE USing biometrics for visa applications from 2010, the Department of Foreign Affairs has announced for the guidance of Filipinos applying for visas to go to the Middle East countries.

It said that Saudi Arabia's passport department has urged Filipinos and other foreign workers there to get their biometric data registered as soon as possible to avoid snags in getting their re-entry visas stamped on time.

Saudi Arabia has begun fingerprinting and taking digital full-face photos of foreigners entering the kingdom on visitors', tourist and work visas, the DFA said.

The Saudi government said the new policy on fingerprinting and full-face digital photographs on visas was introduced to strengthen security, prevent identity theft and combat terrorism.

Khaled bin Saud, the Saudi foreign affairs deputy minister, said authorized biometric service centers would be receiving visa applications on behalf of Saudi embassies and missions at reasonable charges. Cynthia D. Baluyot

Pinay in Yemenia crash a pinch-hitter

SHE WAS NOT SUPPOSED TO be on the ill-fated Yemenia Airways Flight 626 but had been asked to pinch-hit for a Malaysian flight attendant who was on leave.

Camille Lou Libres, 28, a native of Cabanatuan, Nueva Ecija, denied, has been identified as the Filipino crew member in the Airbus A310 that crashed en route to the Comoros islands from Paris last Monday.

"The girl was not supposed to be on that flight but a Malaysian stewardess who was supposed to be on that big went on leave," said Philippine Ambassador to Saudi Arabia Antonio Villamor.

Villamor said the Yemenia airways and the government of Yemen have yet to release any details about the plane's 153 passengers, including 11 crewmembers and 3 infants.

He said he got his information from his contacts in Sana'a, the Yemeni capital. The Riyadh embassy has jurisdiction over Filipinos in Yemen.

Villamor said he was told that Libres was in her mid-20s or early 30s, but could not say what country she was based in or the time of the accident.

The flight had originated in France, with a stop in Yemen before proceeding to the Comoros, a country consisting of a group of islands in the Indian Ocean between Madagascar and the African mainland.

"We don't ascertain which leg she joined. The plane was flying the last leg of a journey taking passengers from Paris and Marseille to Moroni, the capital of the Comoros via France, which flight controllers lost contact with the plane," he said.

Search teams have rescued a 14-year-old girl from the ocean, while three bodies were reported to have been recovered from the waters off the coast of the Comoros.

Villamor said the embassy was still following up with Yemenia Airways and would name names in the hope of finding Libres.

"We are not saying that she's dead but there was only one survivor so far and that's a child," Villamor said.

The Yemenia Airways plane was the second Airbus to crash into the sea recently. An Air France Airbus A330-200 crashed into the Atlantic Ocean on May 31, killing all 228 people on board, as it flew from Rio de Janeiro to Paris. Cynthia D. Baluyot with Agence France-Presse

Naia eases check-in for int'l flights

By Jerome Aning

PASSENGERS OF OUTBOUND INTERNational flights will now find it easier to check in for their flights at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport following the installation of 336 auto-read kiosks in its Terminals 1 and 3 yesterday.

The Manila International Airport Authority (MIAA), which operates the Naia, inaugurated its Common Use Terminal Equipment System that upgraded check-in procedures from the old magnetic stripe technology to bar code which would make it go with the world-class airports in Singapore, Hong Kong, Macau and Dubai.

Amtc Inc., a communications engineering firm based in Annapolis, Maryland, was awarded a three-year contract to supply, install, operate and provide maintenance support for the check-in system for Terminal 1 and the north wing of Terminal 3, which are exclusively being used for international flight and passenger operations.

"We would like to improve and shorten the business process at the airport by replacing the outdated technology with a more modern, efficient and effective system," said MIAA general manager Alfonso Cusi after simple tests held at Naia Terminal 1 around 3 p.m. to mark the start of the new check-in system.

"Airports are constantly looking for new ways to strengthen security and enhance customer satisfaction. This system will provide the MIAA with a scalable and cost-effective common use platform to further upgrade its operations," added Amtc managing director Randy Diaz.

Instead of using magnetic tapes, a two-dimensional bar code will be handprinted on passengers' boarding passes. They get it at the Naia check-in counters.

The service agreement includes a 24/7 maintenance service. The new technology would also be eventually used for the baggage tag identification system.

The Amtc system is known as the "Trim and Read 2d Bar Code" technology. It would replace the old system embraced by the MIAA's previous contractor, Swissport Int'l. Miss Desirée Ann Amandaman de Villanueva, assistant general manager for corporate affairs and airport development services, the Amtc system will service almost 6 million outbound passengers at Naia Terminal 1 and 1.6 million outbound passengers at Terminal 3 yearly.

The passengers would be using the 83 check-in counters and 15 boarding gates at Naia Terminal 1 and 40 check-in counters and 13 boarding gates at Terminal 3.

Service said that in the meantime, Naia Terminal 1 services 40 outbound international flights while Terminal 3 services 39 outbound international flights daily.

"This system change will further boost our efforts to enhancing passenger services which will translate into faster and more orderly check-in process for our international passengers and hopefully also less queuing time," he said.

MIAA general manager Alfonso Cusi joins the new system during yesterday's launch. RYAN ROSAURO

Gov't to appeal perjury acquittal of ex-general

By Edson C. Tandoc Jr.

THE GOVERNMENT is appealing the recent dismissal of perjury charges against retired Maj. Gen. Carlos Garcia, the former military comptroller who is alleged to have amassed P303 million in ill-gotten wealth.

State prosecutors argued that there was enough evidence to show that Garcia, who was acquitted of a third perjury charge last June 18, deliberately misdeclared his assets.

In a motion for reconsideration filed with the Sandiganbayan antigraft court, the prosecutors ask Justice Norberto Quisumbing to disqualify himself from the case.

The motion dismissed Garcia's perjury charges, saying the prosecution had failed to prove that Garcia had willfully and deliberately misstated in his 1997 statement of assets, liabilities and net worth that his cash accounts were worth only P870,000.

The court ruled that the misdeclaration was done "in good faith," so Garcia did not know he was supposed to declare the new ones registered under the name of his wife, Clarita, as among his personal properties.

In the motion, the dissent Prosecutor Maria Justina Hidalgo said that it was the court and not Garcia which asserted the defense of good faith.

She noted that during the trial, Garcia "never claimed good faith."

Hence an "unlawful act is presumed to have been motivated by an unlawful intent," the prosecutors said. Garcia should have presented evidence that he had did not deliberately misdeclare the two cars from his net.

"This was not done," the prosecutors said.

"Garcia, as a retired military officer who controlled the vesting of his declarations could not in any sense be viewed as forgetful in his failure to diligently perform the obligation required of him by the law," it said.

Prosecutors said Garcia should inhibit himself in deciding the appeal, because when he was a member of the 3rd Division, he penned a May 22, 2008, decision which acquitted Garcia of another charge of perjury.

The government has so far lost three of four perjury cases against Garcia. It won one perjury case last February and is still prosecuting two forfeiture cases and a P683-million plunder case against the retired general and his family.

Yango, former CSC commissioner; 84

MARIO YANGO, RETIRED CIVIL SERVICE commissioner and former Philippine representative to the International Civil Service Commission, died on June 29 at the Manila Doctors Hospital surrounded by his family. He was 84.

He is survived by his wife, Pilar Bonifacio, (first wife, Felicitacion Feliciano died in 2002); daughter Angelina Yango-Fernandez; sons Jaime and Mario Jr.; son-in-law Gene Esguerra and daughters-in-law Adora De Ramos and Lori Cello; nine grandchildren and three great grandchildren.

A graduate of the Ateneo College of Law in 1951, Commissioner Yango started as a mere clerk, rose from the ranks through merit and retired as commissioner after 20 years of uninterrupted service. Yango was known and believed for his hard work, efficiency and most of all honesty.

Yango established standards and guidelines and trained an interagency body to pass requirements for managing Civil Service promotions from eligibility requirements. This was one way of making competitive policemen from shirking the eligibility requirement in appointing their protégés in government.

Upon his retirement from the Civil Service Commission in 1991, he was elected to the International Civil Service Commission (ICSC), which is responsible for making recommendations to the General Assembly of the United Nations for the regulations of agencies that participate in the UN common system.

Long after retirement from these capacities, Yango continued to help government employees with eligibility issues as well as assisting employment in government offices. Holding in all these endeavors, Yango often said that his job didn't pay much but it was rewarding.

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THE DAILY GOSPEL

Thursday, July 2, 2009
13th Week in Ordinary Time

1st Reading: Gen 22:1-19
Gospel: Mt 9:1-8

Jesus got back into the boat, crossed the lake again, and came to his hometown. Then they brought a paralyzed man to him, lying on a bed. Jesus saw their faith and said to the paralytic, "Courage, my son! Your sins are forgiven."

Then some teachers of the Law said to themselves, "This man insults God." Jesus was aware of what they were thinking, and said, "Why have you such evil thoughts? Which is easier to say: 'Your sins are forgiven' or 'Stand up and walk'? You must know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins." So then said to the paralyzed man, "Stand up! Take your mat to the house and go home." The man got up, and went home.

When the crowds saw this, they were filled with awe and praised God for giving such power to human beings.

Commentary:

Some believe that God wanted to test Abraham, asked unaware that he did not intend him to sacrifice Isaac. Abraham's faith in God was of such magnitude that he knew, if God told him to sacrifice his son, that God would be able to resurrect the dead. Such faith in God's word and promise is regarded by many Christians as an incredible significant and exemplary one.

This episode shows how God sacrifice both as the participants are prepared to bring this reward for their own sacrificial commitments. And, just as Abraham showed his desire of sacrifice with his son, God the Father allowed people to go ahead and carry out the death of Jesus. Abraham's self-forgiveness to his own son is seen as foreshadowing the willingness of the Father to sacrifice his son. Also, since no struggle is mentioned in Genesis, a contrast is made between Isaac's submission with that of Christ. the cross of thorns Isaac or lay down their own lives to fulfill the will of God.

TIM owner linked to clan close to GMA

Front page A1

ed by Antolec, Total Information Management Corp. (TIM), Rep. Teodoro Casiño called for an inquiry.

The Bayan Muna representative said in a text message to reporters that it would be worth Congress' while to "look into how TIM matured into the position and who brokered that joint venture with Smartmatic."

Casiño said his curiosity over TIM's connections was piqued when he found out that a handful of Antolec's allies, who matured into one of the Abadilla scions.

The Abadilla family is close to President Macapagal-Arroyo and is based in Cebu, reputed as an administration bailiwick.

TIM, which grew to become the biggest all-Filipino IT provider after starting as a utility of suburban Smartmatic in the point of jeopardizing the whole automation process? I think it's not just about the money. Perhaps TIM is deliberately sabotaging the automation because

ANTUNEZ. Absolutely not one.

to the P7.2-billion automation contract were revealed during a Senate inquiry last week when Casiño admitted that Abadilla Transport System's 3GO would ship the 82,200 counting machines to be used to next year's elections.

"The question is why is TIM now mustering itself against its partner Smartmatic to the point of jeopardizing the whole automation process? I think it's not just about the money. Perhaps TIM is deliberately sabotaging the automation because it could not get its way in controlling Smartmatic's system for the benefit of its power backers," Casiño said.

House inquiry

Agusan del Sur Rep. Rodolfo Plaza said he would file a resolution seeking a probe separate from the Senate investigation on the TIM-Smartmatic joint venture meltdown when Congress opens on July 27.

Casiño and Makati Rep. Teodoro Locsin would endorse the probe that would be conducted jointly by the House committees on good government and suffrage and electoral reforms.

"That is a serious matter that Congress should investigate. I don't know if the (Comelec) just wants to make easy money or another party is seeking to mine the process," said Plaza.

Locsin has told reporters that Antolec had told Smartmatic's lawyers in jest that half a billion pesos would solve their differences during a morning a few days ago in a Makati hotel.

He said that this was taken "seriously" by Smartmatic's lawyers because it was just the latest in a string of "impossible demands" that the TIM majority owner had been making since the joint venture won the Comelec bid.

Deal breaker

Locsin said that it proved to be the deal breaker ("It's like asking for Angelina Jolie which is impossible unless one looks like Brad Pitt") because it showed that Antolec did not want the partnership to continue.

"He should respect this (poll automation contract), he should not make jokes about it. If you will make a joke like that, he prejudged for the counterparts because it's not funny. The lawyers in this case should have stopped smile and said, 'don't talk like that, if you talk like that you will have to face Congress'," Locsin said.

By counting out with his P500-million demand, Plaza said that Smartmatic was practically demanding that Smartmatic "buy him out or buy his silence" in the partnership.

"We have to look into this because his demand has placed the entire 2010 elections in jeopardy," Plaza said, adding Antolec would be the primary witness in the probe.

Not about money

Abner-Auto, the owner of Antolec, Casiño said there was more than money the eyes in the international squabble.

"I don't think they are fighting about money because both of them stand to earn a lot from the contract. I think they are fighting on who will get control of the system which obviously is the most important aspect of the project," he said.

Plaza and Locsin said that the Comelec had no choice but to solid the project because the failure between the partners resulted in a failed bidding.

But Plaza said the Comelec should peg the value of a new poll automation contract at P7.2 billion, or the same as TIM-Smartmatic's bid.

Locsin said the losing bidder that were likely to give the project a second look would be placed to a third as the Smartmatic-TIM's winning proposal was done in a black book published.

"They might have other concerns in order to make a bid lower than that," Locsin said.

Happy days are here again

Casiño said the big question now is whether the Comelec had time for a rebid, given the limited time and the lack of competence of Comelec officials.

With automation on to deadlined, operations at "digging-hours"—were starting and pushing—until he back in business, he said.

"It's happy time again for the dagdag-bawas operations and in that game, it's the highest bidder that really has the advantage," Casiño said. With a report from Leila B. Salaverria

TIM head denies ties to First Gentleman

Front page A1

ties until Friday to come to an agreement and another 15 days to vote on the incorporation of the joint venture company thus will handle the automation of next May's balloting.

Major bone of contention

Another TIM source said the company was willing to exercise the joint venture agreement for as long as the safeguards TIM wanted would be incorporated in the bylaws. That the company is to be formed would be 60 percent owned by TIM and 40 percent by Smartmatic.

The source said TIM had not changed its mind about the joint venture, as originally conceptualized, and was unwilling to accept provisions in the bylaws that could reduce its capability to check and balance the joint venture company's financial disbursements.

The major bone of contention, the source noted, was that the proposed framework would give Smartmatic absolute control of the purse.

"What if there are questionable disbursements, such as an overpriced supply contract? There should be dual signatories," the source explained.

Deadline can't be met

The source added that there was a chance that the joint venture deal could be fixed, as TIM's concern was but a basic procedural requirement in any joint venture.

"It's not difficult to do that," the source said. But the source could not assure what the chances were of the differences being resolved by Friday, the deadline given by the Comelec.

It's also up to Smartmatic to agree to the deal, the source noted, adding that a P1.134-billion bank funding for the Smartmatic-TIM joint venture was available for incorporating the company.

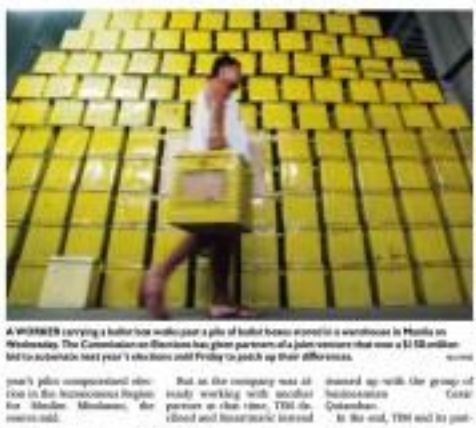
Under the contract, the Comelec would purse paid the provider P7.19 billion for the lease of goods and purchase of services.

Smartmatic could draw towards bid appreciated TIM for this joint venture.

3rd party backed out

Smartmatic had also sought partnership with TIM for last year's poll-computerized election in the autonomous Region for Muslim Mindanao, the source said.

But as the company was already working with another partner at that time, TIM declined and Smartmatic instead



A WORKER carrying a ballot box walks past a pile of ballot boxes stored in a warehouse in Manila on Wednesday. The Comelec and Smartmatic-TIM joint venture—that won a $1.52-million bid to automate next year's elections—will Friday to patch up their differences. AFP/File

teamed up with the group of businessman Cesar Quiambao.

In the end, TIM said to partner Indra did not participate in the understanding.

This time around, the source said, TIM agreed to join the consortium because a reputable third party was supposed to be part of it. Along the way, however, this third partner backed out of the project.

Who is Antolec?

Antolec was into IT marketing before he teamed up Abner-Auto. He was born in Bislolat grew up in Cebu. He went to the De La Salle University to obtain his college and graduated with a degree in business management in 1973.

From 1973 to 1981, he worked for IT companies in the marketing department but later decided to go on his own. In 1981, he put up Total Information Management Corp., likewise with the acronym TIM, and managed the selling of furniture.

He then ventured into the computer in the 1983 assassination of Ninoy Aquino. Antolec shifted to IT services by 1985.

TIM now employs about 200 people and provides IT services primarily to the financial sector.

Makati Business Club disturbed by Smartmatic-TIM breakup

By Abigail L. Ho

THE INFLUENTIAL MAKATI Business Club (MBC) yesterday said it sees "deeply disturbed" by the breakup of the consortium that won the bidding for computerized ballot-counting.

In a statement, the MBC said that the withdrawal of Total Information Management Corp. (TIM) from its partnership with Smartmatic International placed "the time of the critical 2010 elections under a cloud of uncertainty."

"Rather than comment further on this development, we would like to study all options and the consequences the situation will entail under the new time constraints, including the possibility of continuing manual counting and counting with automated transmission and consolidation of the election results," it said.

The Computer Professionals' Union (CPU), which has criticized Comelec's "hasty implementation" of the poll automation project, said Smartmatic should not be allowed to participate in the elections in any way.

"No it stands, if the current Comelec itself tries to implement the automated elections with Smartmatic, it would be nothing short of selling out the 2010 elections to foreigners," CPU national coordinator Rich Bolinger said in a statement.

The Comelec is unprepared and technically incapable to do the automation, it will be blindly following Smartmatic's lead. We fear that whoever has close links with the said firm will most probably win the elections," Bolinger said.

He said the automated election system would only work if the people or the body overseeing the project "are committed to protect the interests of the Filipinos instead of their own.

Having a computerized system in place would cut elections cheating and election fraud, Bolinger added.

Election manipulators will be at work just the same, he said, "but now with a different modus operandi."

"Failure to address these issues would put the elections right to the palms of those in power, or worse, lead to a failed election," Bolinger said.

The cross-member Comelec advisory council in a new page resolution Tuesday urged the Comelec to push through with the automation project "using whatever legal means are available."

The council also asked the Comelec to pursue legal actions against TIM executives.

Henrietta de Villa, chair of the Parish Pastoral Council for Responsible Voting and a member of the council, appealed to nonetheless officials to settle their differences.

"Nobody's telling them not to make profit. You enter into a business to make profit, but don't be greedy. Be reasonable. He Villa said in a phone interview with reporters.

She said she called TIM president Jose Mari Antolec to ask him to "find a common ground" with Smartmatic.

"Automation given no longer their choosing in manual elections would be United. It can even end vote buying and selling because it cannot affect the results of the elections anymore," Dr. Villa said.

With a report from Marlon Ramos

Remember 'Hello Garci'? He's all for automation

Front page A1

wiretapping scandal in 2005, Garcillano was accused by the opposition of stealing the victory of President Macapagal-Arroyo in the 2004 presidential election.

The "Hello Garci" scandal refers to the wiretapped telephone conversation between Garcillano, then a Comelec commissioner, and Mr Arroyo about giving her actual of 1 million votes over the late actor Fernando Poe Jr., her nearest rival. Congress was then canvassing the votes for presidential candidates.

Electoral reform

The scandal triggered street protests calling for Mr Arroyo to step down, the resignation of several Cabinet officials and government executives, and impeachment complaints against her.

But today Garcillano insists his name that he is "no supporter" to single-handedly orchestrate the alleged rigging of elections.

"I would rather say that automation of election should be a very good electoral reform," he said.

Arguments

In automated polls, there will be no arguments in the precinct counting and (in the city, municipal or provincial) canvassing because one can't argue with machines, Garcillano said.

"The machines will be the ones to count the results. That will already give us breathing space from accusations and counter-accusations of cheating," he said.

Garcillano pointed out that the Filipino electorate should be given the privilege of voting in an automated system "in order for people not to claim or accuse [the Comelec] of cheating."

Smartmatic

The diagnosed election official made it clear during a phone interview that he could not comment on the row between Total Information Management Corp. and Smartmatic-International, which fueled rumors that the 2010 elections would be conducted manually.

"The way it's going, it would be better if it's botched. I'm standing on that," Garcillano said.

He also refused to pass judgment on Comelec Chair Jose Melo.

GARCILLANO. They heard nothing. JAY ISAIAH/INQUIRER

Results known in 2 days

Garcillano agreed with senators who pushed for automation that it was the only way to speed up the electoral process.

"It will speed up the transmission of election results, so we can quickly know the [winners]," he said.

Garcillano reasoned that when he was still in the Comelec, partial automation was tried in the 1994 elections in the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao.

Having only hand-count to two measures per station "(the count) the fastest

66% OF FILIPINOS DO NOT WANT CHA-CHA NOW.

Why are 174 congressmen forcing it through H.R. 1109?

The Supreme Court has ruled that H.R.1109 does not constitute a justiciable controversy. The House is faced with two choices. To back off, or to pursue the issue by proposing cha-cha without the Senate. For this, they need a vote equal to at least three-fourths the number of the Senate and the House combined. Then they have to ask the Supreme to conduct a plebiscite.

We appeal to our congressmen and the administration **not** to pursue the issue and divide the country further with political adventurism. There are more urgent needs to work on together: we are feeling the global recession; the economic gains attained in recent years have not benefited the poor; and our democratic institutions are at peril.

Our position today on constitutional change is the same as in 2006:

ONE VOICE is not against any amendments to the Constitution. But if the people really want major structural and policy changes, i.e. a shift to a parliamentary or federal system, or a change in the economic provisions from the present more nationalistic design, these should be done through a constitutional convention (ConCon) and not a ConRes.

Why? Because in the present political environment, it is vulnerable to backroom dealings, political trade-offs, even corruption. The poor will have no voice. In contrast, the ConCon is conducted in public and continuous proceedings before the full glare of media scrutiny.

We give political space to the administration to take steps to restore the trustworthiness of our institutions. But it did not.

Instead, governance continued to deteriorate and self-serving politics increasingly the norm of behavior in public life. The administration repeatedly pushed the constitutional boundaries of Executive power. It stonewalled efforts to gain full access to information on questionable decisions and contracts amidst allegations of corruption in high places.

Instead, the distrust of the people was heightened by:

- The underperformance on poverty issues, the agrarian reform, urban land reform and housing, investment drivers and fisheries, and safety nets in income, education and health.
- The increase in the incidence and numbers of the poor, and in the disparities in income and wealth.
- The high incidence of extra-judicial and agrarian related killings, where the intimidation/collusion is many times overt.
- The damage to our institutions by the Executive, especially by the front-line agencies that are forces in the rule of law (civil service, office of the ombudsman, the courts) (Philippine Human Development Report 2008/2009)
- The pervasive corruption and the increasing lack of transparency in public accountability, with their adverse consequences to the poor. The Philippines has not been considered a functioning electoral democracy since 2007. (Freedom House)

This is clearly not a time for cha cha. Instead, the administration should be preparing for a peaceful and graceful transfer of power by June 30, 2010.

- The 2010 presidential elections should be held as scheduled.
- Voters, especially the youth, must register to vote.
- The elections must be free, fair and credible.
- The Arroyo administration must step down by June 30, 2010.
- We should choose new leaders with the total commitment to social reform, who are competent in governance and have the political will to do right by the people, regardless of personal interests. Otherwise, it would be more of the same thing with different faces.

As in the past, we must be vigilant against:

(1) Any attempt to cheat in the elections, with or without automation. To avert No-El or failure of election, there should be a back-up plan to automation, or that by latest Nov 2009, a decision can be made to scale down, or revert to total manual, or adopt OMR (manual vote and precinct count plus automated canvassing).

(2) Any attempt to establish any form of authoritarianism.

(3) Any over-reaction to provocation or concealment from the extreme right or left that might result in civil disorder. While they have different end games – martial law on the one hand and revolutionary upheaval on the other – any violent contest for power will be disastrous for our country.

This is a time for thinking deeply about our country. To protect it from turmoil and division, strengthen its institutions and put it back on track to fulfill the promise of EDSA I – that of a just and progressive society. ***As citizens, what can we do?***

First, educate ourselves. Read up on issues. Discern the commentaries and reports of media. Attend fora.

Second, talk with one another, with those who agree with us as well as those who don't and those who have not yet formed their views. Find unity in the vision of a better Philippines. And in peaceful and democratic means to achieve it.

Third, speak up. Write to your congressman, to your local leaders, to the newspapers. Call to and radio programs. Join online discussions (or visit www.caucus.com/StopConNowNow).

Fourth, link up with groups that share your beliefs. Your NGO, village association, civic club, professional or religious groups. Or join ***ONE VOICE*** (www.onevoice.com.ph).

When the voice of the silent is made known to our leaders, whether in or out of government, we can find our way step by step into a less uncertain and better future. Together we can all be part of the solution.

Stop the Con Ass.
Transfer power through the 2010 Elections.
Fulfill the promise of Edsa I.

IN 2006:
ONE VOICE opposed the so-called People's Initiative at the Supreme Court because it was legally flawed, not genuine and proposed changes that would give more power to those who already had too much. The Supreme Court struck it down as unconstitutional.

We opposed the House attempt to railroad a constituent assembly which was withdrawn in the face of a national protest.

ONE VOICE

Whistle-blower says gov't behind bombings

From page A1

the bombings. We were doing that in the past. It's a means for this law to that their plans can go through."

Previously, only three days after a bomb exploded at the Office of the Ombudsman in Quezon City, a bomb threat was sent to a text message to one of its lawyers, Evelyn Dapidil. Ombudsman Emilio Gonzalez III re- sued some 500 suspected employees.

The bomb squad of the Quezon City Police District searched the five floors of the building on Agham Road but found nothing.

The text message, which was in Filipino, said a bomb "with C4 composition" had been placed somewhere in the building and would explode after office hours.

It was received by lawyer Sharon Genovea of the agency's Preliminary Investigation and Adjudication Monitoring Office at about 11 a.m.

Dalisayan was not in her office yesterday.

Change in strategy

Doble expressed doubt that those behind the purported manipulation of the 2004 presidential election would make the same moves as before.

"They will likely change their strategy," said Doble, who told a Senate inquiry in September 2007 that he was part of an intelligence unit that monitored and recorded the "Hello Garci" phone conversation between Mr. Arroyo and Commission on Elections Commissioner Virgilio Garcillano in 2004.

He said this was because the people were now fully aware that cheating in the 2004 election was done through duplication, or rob-padding and shading, of the marked ballots.

"So you know that election returns are what should be marked," he said. "That Garci scenario will no longer succeed."

Doble also said it was possible that there would be an election in 2010. He said when the administration was unwilling was the lawmaker that voted to be taught against Mr. Arroyo and her people when she stepped down in 2010.

He said the bombings were intended "to confuse the people, to make it appear there is chaos, so that just in case, they could go to their bigger scenario, such as imposing martial law."

'No details'

Philippine National Police Director General Jesus Verzosa reiterated the administration's official line dispelling rumors of a destabilization plot.

But he said recent bomb-related incidents should be considered as isolated events, including the President's transfer the Station Address from Cebu this month and the coming election season.

Speaking on the matter for the first time, Verzosa said police intelligence had indicated no such attempt to shake up the administration as much as it approached its final months until the May 2010 elections.

"We have no analysis yet pertaining to the presence of destabilization," Verzosa said.

"All of these things must be analyzed in the course of the upcoming events. We have to also look at the political situations, the overall situations, leading to any conclusion," he said.

He reassured of these major events in the future, the filing of candidacies of presidential aspirants, the Christmas season and the 2010 polls.

"We have to rely on the facts and not on the results of the investigation but, to the, assure us evidence of it being linked to destabilization," Verzosa said.

THREE DAYS LATER A K9 unit checks for explosives at the Office of the Ombudsman after it received threats. But the bomb squad after searching through the first floor building on Agham Road, Quezon City, found nothing. INQUIRER

SURVEILLED Former military intelligence operative Vidal Doble says that when he was still with the body, bombings were done by the government to bring about a desired scenario.

In succession

On June 20, two grenades exploded at a town celebration in Bicutan, Tanauguan, killing one person and leaving 32 others. Authorities placed the blame on separatist rebels.

Early on June 20, an improvised device was set off at the Office of the Ombudsman compound, damaging the water treatment plant, some windows of the second-floor rooms, as well as the employees' disaster service.

On June 29, another improvised device exploded by a roadside in Maguindanao, killing two men fishing catfish in a nearby river and wounding eight others.

In Quezon City, first nine-day, a package containing an improvised explosive was found on the grounds of the Department of agriculture and another containing half a pound of C4, a plastic explosive usually used by the military, was found inside the elevated floor of the Commission building on Commonwealth Avenue.

Police said the devices were not intended to explode because they were not fitted with blasting caps.

First threat

Deputy Ombudsman Orlando Casimiro yesterday said it was the first time the agency had received a bomb threat since it moved to its five-story building in Quezon City in 2002.

Because of the threat and the explosion on Sunday, Casimiro said, "we found it prudent to declare a half-day suspension [of work]." But some employees stayed at their posts.

Casimiro said the suicidal remarks before the day also said he did not want to open door so when could have received the threat.

Asked to comment, Armed Forces chief Gen. Hermogenes Esperon Jr. said: "We will not draw us from our work. But we will have to strengthen our security measures."

Sen. Panfilo Lacson, the ranking head of the Quezon City Police District Mobile Group, said the bomb threat could be investigated although it seemed inept.

"It could be a hoax, but we will continue the investigation to determine the source of the threat," he said.

Chief Supt. Elmo San Diego, director of the Quezon City Police District, said he had ordered "target-hardening measures and improved police visibility" in all city government offices.

"We are taking all threats seriously and I have already spoken to all cities of bomb threats," San Diego said.

Senior Insp. Arnulfo Fraizer, head of the Explosive Ordinance Division, said city police conducted the inside-to-room search with the Ombudsman's security personnel.

Fraizer said the people in the building were immediately by the threat because of the Sunday explosion.

Makati moves

The Bomb team to Quezon City has prompted Makati Mayor Jejomar Binay to order the city police chief, Senior Supt. Cesberto Tinoy, to increase police visibility and tighten security, especially in the central business district.

"Top corporations and business establishments are situated here in Makati. The city government is mature to a point where it can guarantee the peace and security the safety of its constituents," Binay said.

The mayor called on Makati residents and tenants to report suspicious activities or characters to the Makati Command Center at 168, at 09 870-1020, 870-1021, 870-1028.

"I am asking everyone to cooperate to help the city by heeding my security to the buildings and malls. They should also closely coordinate with the Makati police," Binay said. With reports from Erwin Oximoncillo, Nonoy E. Carvajal, Alison M. Lopez and Inquirer Research

Thousands of jobs await Filipinos in Guam, Japan

From page A1

engineers and other professionals, according to an official of the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA).

Guam will be hiring between 10,000 and 15,000 workers to support the US military buildup, including the relocation of 8,000 Marines and their families from Okinawa over the next few years, Gov. Felix Camacho told reporters in Manila on Thursday.

No to Chinese workers

He said he requested skilled Filipino workers to fill job demands that could not be met by local labor alone.

"It is not exclusive but the likelihood is that more will be from the Philippines," Camacho said. Chinese workers will not be hired because of security concerns related to work on military bases, Camacho said.

Several years ago, Filipinos were also tapped to build facilities in Guam under the Clark Special Project. 40 Clark members failed to 9-11 were deemed.

Minimum wage

The US Home armed services commissioner last week passed a bill saying foreign workers must be paid the minimum wage for 90 percent of the work on the Guam project.

The 2010 National Defense Authorization Act would require that the minimum wage for all Guam construction projects be at the prevailing wage level by similar work in Hawaii, said US Rep. Neil Abercrombie from Hawaii.

The building in Guam will cost at least $15 billion Japan is covering $6 billion of the bill.

Tip of iceberg

Filipino engineers, information technology experts and other professionals are welcome to work in Japan especially since the Japan Economic Partnership Agreement (Jepa) has already taken effect, said Tego Bhodia, principal for investor representative to the Philippines.

"Jobs for caregivers and nurses are just the tip of the iceberg," Tego said yesterday.

He said the same message was relayed to President Macapagal-Arroyo during her most recent state visit to Japan.

First batch

Some 270 Filipinos were deployed to Japan in May, comprising the first batch of nurses and caregivers to be allowed to work in the land of the rising sun following the ratification of Jepa.

Under Jepa, the first batch will end in October last year, Japan and the Philippines agreed to improve business ties and allow entry nurses to each other's markets. The agreement also allows more Filipinos to work in Japan.

Aging population

Tego said Japan's aging population made it necessary for the Japanese economy to allow the entry of foreign workers to fill in current and future job vacancies.

Since many Filipinos seek employment and better opportunities offshore, Jepa is a win-win solution for both countries, he said.

More than 200,000 Filipinos are based in Japan, according to government estimates.

In the first quarter of the year, they remitted $385 million to the Philippines, accounting for 4.6 percent of the total remittances from overseas Filipinos during the period.

Arroyo administration officials said the availability of more jobs in Japan for Filipinos is a welcome development for the Philippines, whose economy is partly dependent on remittances to spur household consumption.

Japanese language

But Filipinos to move easily find jobs in Japan, they must study the Japanese language, said Melinda Hucle, Jica representative to the Philippines.

While most Filipino workers know how to speak English, some Japanese firms prefer applicants who can speak Japanese, he said.

"Many Filipino workers think that knowing English is enough. They don't realize that learning Japanese is important as well," he also told the business.

Miranda said it would benefit Filipinos seeking to work in Japan to undergo enhanced training, to meet the Japanese firms' labor requirements are stricter than average.

Robust remittance

The further opening of the Japanese labor market to Filipinos was one reason the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP) cited for projecting that remittances would remain robust this year.

Contrary to forecasts by some economists that remittances would shrink, the BSP said the sector would be a fast growth. The country recorded a total of $18.4 billion in remittances last year.

The BSP said robust remittances, which fuel household consumption, would help prevent the Philippine economy from slipping into recession. Reports from AP and Michelle V. Rosse

New Honduras leader defies int'l pressure

From page A1

DUETED Honduran President Manuel Zelaya (at rear) offered a toast to the Organization of American States at Wednesday's emergency session in Washington given the interim government in Honduras 72 hours to reinstate Zelaya or face suspension from the OAS. AFP/OAS

MILITARY PRESENCE Army soldiers guard a building at the Honduran capital Tegucigalpa's airport area. The graffiti refer to Roberto Micheletti, who is Congress nuevo president on Sunday ous Zelaya. Micheletti (on the central leader will be arrested if he returns.

AP

dential palace, called Zelaya in his pajamas and whisked him out of the country to Costa Rica in a dramatized on Sunday sparking the worst political turmoil in Central America since the end of Cold War wars of the 1980s.

Roberto Micheletti, who belongs to Zelaya's Liberal Party, was named interim leader by Congress following the coup that was triggered by Zelaya's bid to hold a opinion on Honduras seeking to amend the Constitution and remain in office.

"We are now one in law-office system," Micheletti said late Tuesday during international calls by world figures urging from US President Barack Obama to Zelaya's left-wing allies in Latin America that the deposed leader be returned.

Micheletti said Zelaya would be arrested if he returned through with his plan to return to Honduras.

The presidents of Argentina and Ecuador as well as the heads of the Organization of American States and the UN General Assembly have agreed to accompany Zelaya on his return home.

Crimes against the Constitution

Zelaya "has already committed crimes against the Constitution and the law," Micheletti said.

"We can no longer return to the presidency of the republic unless a presidential trial is carried out," he added.

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"We can no longer return to the presidency of the republic unless a presidential trial is carried out," he added.

The military moved against Zelaya after he insisted on holding a referendum asking Hondurans if they wanted to amend the Constitution. The Supreme Court and Congress said the referendum was illegal. Micheletti claimed ballot illegal.

One of several clauses that cannot be legally altered in the Honduran Constitution forbids presidents to a single, four-year term. Congress's chief, Zelaya, whose term ends in January, modified the ballot question at the last minute to allow him to eventually seek reelection.

Zelaya, an ally of fellow Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez, who has used referendums to win the right to run successively, looked to follow in Chavez's footsteps in the controversial vote.

At the UN headquarters in New York on Tuesday, Zelaya sought to defuse tensions and promised to give up the constitutional changes he wanted.

"I'm not going to lobby a constitutional assembly," said the 57-year-old wealthy rancher and timber magnate. "And if I'm offered the chance to stay in power, I won't. I'm going to serve my four years."

In response, the UN General Assembly voted by acclamation to demand Zelaya's immediate reinstatement.

The vote, only the 192 member-states to recognize only Zelaya and passed a resolution by "the immediate and unconditional restoration of the legitimate and constitutional government."

OAS resolution

In the early morning hours of Wednesday the OAS held an emergency session at its Washington headquarters and passed a resolution condemning the coup and demanding the "immediate, safe and unconditional return of the president to his constitutional functions."

The resolution declared that "no government arising from the unconstitutional interruption will be recognized."

The OAS gave the coup leaders three days to comply with its resolution before Honduras is suspended from the bloc.

"We need to show clearly that military coups will not be accepted. We thought we were in an era when military coups were no longer possible in the hemisphere," said OAS Secretary General José Miguel Insulza.

Zelaya, who attended the session, referred his "favorite thanks" to the OAS.

"It is the irony for time that this organization has spoken so vehemently, with such conviction, condemning aggression act, whose power has provided over reason and where the power of a country has been broken," he said.

Zelaya, who earlier vowed to return to Honduras "at any cost," said the reasons that the 72 hour ultimatum had prompted him to reschedule his flight home during the weekend.

The ousted leader is expected to meet with US officials in Washington before heading back to Honduras.

Zelaya has gained the funding of Obama, the Democrat Party and even still regards him as the president of Honduras.

Increasingly isolated

The interim government in Honduras has become increasingly isolated, with the country cut off from funding by the World Bank and regional banks, including the suspension of loans and payments to the impoverished nation of some 7.5 million people.

US state department spokesperson Ian Kelly said Washington was considering cutting off aid to Honduras, which included the $135 million from Congress from the US-backed Millennium Challenge Corp.

Spain's foreign ministry also announced on Wednesday that it was recalling its ambassador from Honduras to protest the coup, saying the true part of international efforts to restore democracy.

Spanish Foreign Minister Miguel Angel Moratinos said Madrid wanted the European Union to also recall its ambassadors, following similar actions by Mexico and Chile.

Despite the intense international pressure, Micheletti said Honduras would be ready to defend itself against any invasion by any Latin American country.

"We will not accept any possible incursion [of Chavez and earlier Somoza] that any aggression toward Zelaya from Michelet. It's government should prompt a military intervention by the United Nations.

"If there is any invasion against our country, U.S. military forces will be ready to defend our territory and our laws and our homeland and our government," Micheletti said.

Too late

Micheletti said it was too late for Zelaya to succeed in office.

His chief minister, Enrique Dunn, threw a solid card on the table, telling CBS that Zelaya had been letting drug traffickers ship US-bound cocaine from Venezuela through Honduras.

Orbis said the US Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) was aware of Zelaya's links to organized crime. DEA spokesperson Barry Payne could neither confirm nor deny the allegations.

Micheletti said he had no contact with any US official since assuming the presidency.

The interim leader, who now occupies the executive office in the traditional presidential palace that Zelaya did, insisted he was getting on with the business of governing.

He said his newly appointed cabinet ministers were working in, even as rebels wandered the streets following the ousting of their president in favor of Zelaya's supporters away. Reports from AP, AFP and Reuters

Now, Palace expresses outrage over poll fiasco

By Christine V. Esguerra

MALACAÑANG IS BLOWING hot and cold on the looming election accusation fiasco.

Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita and Presidential Adviser on Political Affairs Gabriel Claudio yesterday expressed outrage at the squabble over ballots, the cornerstone that soon the tender for the computerization of next year's balloting, paving the project at risk.

"The government will hold accountable and prosecute to the full extent of the law parties to breach of agreement with the (Commission on Elections) on the matter of poll automation," Claudio said.

Ermita said a candid briefing that the government was trying to avoid the impression that "these people can just do what they want (and) jeopardize a major project of the administration."

On Sunday, Press Secretary Cerge Remonde was asked by reporters why the Palace appeared unperturbed by Comelec's announcement on Monday of the withdrawal of Total Information Management Corp. (TIM) from its partnership with Smartmatic-Interactive.

Remonde replied, "It always pays to be cool and that is the responsible thing to do."

While Ermita said Malacañang was hosting the meeting in the Comelec, he stressed that the poll body should put "its stuff" officials of both Smartmatic and its local partners.

"The government should not be held captive by their differences," he said.

Ermita said he had asked Comelec Chair Jose Melo about the problem and was told that the two firms had been given until tomorrow to settle their differences.

GMA concerned

Ermita said President Macapagal-Arroyo also expressed "concerns" over the Smartmatic-TIM row, noting that election automation was part of the administration's centerpiece program.

Claudio said the companies should "exercise all the prudence, responsibility, and professionalism they can muster to get their act together and see the automation of the 2010 elections through."

"They should be called to task by letting them answer to the government agency (involved) — in this case, the Comelec—why they are acting in that manner and why they cannot consummate the contract," Ermita said.

He said the government could look into the possibility of forfeiting the bond placed by the consortium when it participated in the bid.

"All government agencies should be on the lookout for these safeguards so that the national government and its agencies will not be held captive by (private entities)," he said.

Ermita cited news reports on Bidder Rep. Teodoro Locsin Jr.'s claim that problems began when officials of TIM asked for P600 million "in just" from Smartmatic to yield control over the electronic counting system.

All is not lost

Whether the allegation was true, Ermita said the firm should "live by their commitment in the Comelec so what they can supposed to do."

He indicated that all would not be lost in case Smartmatic and TIM failed to work things out.

"There are many options that we can explore," he said. "(But) we don't want to speculate what it is the Palace is inclined to do. Election matters are with the Comelec."

Ermita appealed to critics not to exploit the problem with acrimonious.

"Let us not fuel the situation that could lead to something that is not agreeable and would be harmful to the overall national interests," he said.

Cory in serious condition; kin, friends pray

From page A1

"She asked the people to allow her this time for herself. She said she would rather not talk about her mom's condition at the moment," Abando said.

Call for prayers

Earlier yesterday at the first of a novena of healing Masses for the 79-year-old Aquino at the Everstill 3 chapel in Makati City, Sitjar said "(Let us Cory" could "talk and pray" but was "not well."

"She needs all your prayers," Sitjar said.

The open-sided chapel was standing room only for the noontime Mass dedicated to Aquino and others afflicted with cancer.

"Our hearts are burdened because of the illness of our beloved former President, and the pain and discomfort she has to endure," broadcaster Bonfon Gonzalez said, reading the novena prayers.

"She took the hand of our dear sister Cory as she struggled through every trial, as she confronted every challenge, and embraced every cancer of her life. Take her hand now and have mercy on her and upon all poor souls who are in agony and make 'their will known to them," said Gonzalez, who has asked the former President to be a sponsor at her wedding to Sen. Mar Roxas.

Among those present at the Mass were former members of the Aquino Cabinet led by former Senate President Franklin Drilon and wife Milo, former Finance Secretary Ramon del Rosario Jr., Propy Arico and his wife Margie, who served in Aquino's appointments secretary, Manila Mayor Fred Lim, and Ana Aroyo's assistant Lindy Soliman and Leah Navarro of the Black and White Movement.

In Negros Occidental, Bishop Bishop Vicente Navarra also called on the faithful to pray for Aquino's well-being.

Kabankalan Bishop Patricio Buzon did the same in enrolling Aquino's legacy to the nation, which was to end the Marcos dictatorship in February 1986 and restore freedom and democracy to the nation.

'We need her'

In a statement issued by his office, Aquino's only son, Sen. Benigno "Noynoy" Aquino III said he "sincerely thanks all those who attended the novena Mass and those who continue to pray for his mother's healing."

Drilon said he last spoke with Noynoy Aquino last week and that the latter "did not sound very optimistic because of his mother's apparent problems."

"We have no other recourse but to pray, pray very hard, for her," Drilon said in a phone interview. "It's very difficult to lose Cory at this time when we need her most."

Aquino, known as the icon of Filipino people power, remained active in social and political causes even after stepping down from office.

In July 2005, she added her voice to the growing call for President Macapagal-Arroyo to relinquish her allegations of vote-rigging and corruption, and later joined protest rallies against the administration.

Internet Rosas and Manuel Villar Jr., both presidential aspirants, called on the people to pray for Aquino.

"I have heard the news that President Aquino is undergoing a difficult time in her illness," Rosas said, adding that he joined the people in praying for her quick recovery.

"President Cory is one of the greatest leaders I respect and admire," he said, adding:

"Mrs. President, please fight on. We need you."

Villar said the former President was entering "a critical period in the battle against cancer."

"We will forever be indebted to President Cory for her significant contribution to the restoration of democracy in the country. In this time when there are serious threats to our democracy, she remains the icon that our people turn to for hope," Villar said in a statement.

"Our prayers are also with the members of her family. May their unshakeable faith in God strengthen them in this difficult time," he said.

'Let's storm heaven'

Ever Malacañang called on the public to pray for Aquino's immediate recovery.

"That's bad news," Cabinet Secretary Silvestre Bello, who served as justice secretary during the Aquino administration, said of reports that Aquino was seriously ill.

"Let's start praying for her. Let's storm heaven with our prayers for the fastest President to be given a new lease on life," Bello said in a phone interview.

He said he had always included Aquino in his prayers, and that he would go to St. Jude Church near Malacañang to offer prayers for her.

Malacañang held a Thanksgiving Mass early in May for the successful colon cancer operation of Aquino at Makati Medical Center. Ali Atienza, then in Manila, called to counsel her Cabinet officials to organize the Mass.

In attendance at that Mass was Aquino's brother Jose Cojuangco and wife Margarita Cojuangco, and brother-in-law Agapito "Butz" Aquino. Reporters Jeff D. Zamora, Allison B. Lopez, Maribel B. Cruz, Cherie Elle O. Arandelaño and TJ Burgonio in Manila; Gerla F. Esmeo, Inquirer Visayas

FORMER Sec. Franklin Drilon is one of many former officials from the Aquino incumbency who took to hour the reading Mass at the Everstill 3 chapel. Drilon was Ms. Aquino's executive secretary. RAY ALMONTE

Jackson's last journey to Neverland

From page A1

buddies. One have a phone number that rings at a custom-made entertainment, flamboyant and polite-wear spoiled-brat gimmicks.

Some fans say the star should be buried at the ranch and many it to be somewhere near a shrine similar to Elvis Presley's Graceland.

Fantasy land to crime scene

Neverland was named after the fantasy island of Peter Pan, Jackson's inspiration when enthralled to grow up.

But the estate fell into disrepair after becoming an alleged crime scene in Jackson's 2005 trial on child molestation charges.

Jackson entered the property following his acquittal and never lived there again.

The estate was reportedly on the verge of foreclosure before Jackson's death as his management frantically tried mounting personal and legal problems took their toll on his finances.

The long-term fate of Neverland has been one of the myriad legal issues arising from Jackson's sudden death last week at age 50.

The Associated Press reported on Tuesday that Jackson drafted a will in 2002 that divided his estate between his mother, his three children and one or more charities. (See related story on Page A22.)

Hail-Mary, half-cold

Jackson was on distraught over persistent insomnia in recent months that he pleaded for a powerful sedative despite warnings it could be harmful, says a nutritionist who was working with the singer as he prepared his comeback bid.

Cherilyn Lee, a registered nurse whose specialty includes nutritional counseling, said on Tuesday that she repeatedly rejected his demands for the drug, Diprivan, which is given intravenously.

1972 Jackson as one of the "Jackson 5" but clearly the star among his brothers.

1983 Jackson from his "Thriller" video

1983 Ajanovic

But a frantic phone call she received from a member of Jackson's staff four days before his death made her fear that he somehow obtained Diprivan or another drug to induce sleep, Lee said.

"He called and was very frantic and said, 'Michael needs to see you right away,' I said, 'What's wrong?' And I could hear Michael in the background ... 'One side of my body is lost, it's lost, and one side of my body is cold. It's very cold,'" she said.

"I said, 'Tell him he needs to go to the hospital. I don't know what's going on, but he needs to go to the hospital ... right away.'"

'He was crying out'

At that point, I knew that somebody had given him something that hit the central nervous system," Lee said. "He was in trouble humbly and he was crying out."

Jackson did not go to the hospital. He died June 25 after suffering cardiac arrest, his family said.

Autopsies have been conducted, but an official cause of death is not expected for several weeks.

"I don't know what happened there. The only thing I can say is he was adamant about this drug," Lee said.

Following Jackson's death, allegations emerged that he had been consuming painkillers, sedatives and anticonvulsants.

But Lee said she encountered a man named by many deprivation and one who expressed opposition to nonsensical drug use.

Not to get high

"He wasn't looking to get high or feel good and isolated from things," Lee said. "This was a person who was not on drugs. This was a person who was nodding help, desperately, to get some sleep, to get some rest."

Jackson was abhorring fatal for what would have been his big comeback—his "This Is It" tour, a series of performances that would have stranded the aging dancer's body.

"The Incredible Hulk" star Lou Ferrigno, who's been working out with Jackson for the past several months, said Jackson was focused on health.

"When he was with me, he wasn't different. He wasn't mental. He wasn't high. He wasn't being sliced or speedy. Never talked about drugs," Ferrigno said. "For seven years, like today, he was always talking about nutrition."

Several months ago, Jackson had begun budgeting her about Diprivan, also known as Propofol, Lee said.

It is an intravenous anesthetic drug widely used in operating rooms to induce unconsciousness. It is generally given through an intravenous needle in the hand.

Jackson given Propofol after less time to regain consciousness than those administered remedy after drugs, and they report waking up more clear headed and refreshed, said University of Chicago psychopharmacologist James Zacny.

Overdose stops breathing

It has also been implicated in drug abuse, with people using it to "chill out" or to combat anxiety, Zacny said. Accidental deaths linked to abuse have been reported.

The powerful drug has a very narrow therapeutic window, meaning it doesn't take much more than the medically recommended amount to stop a person's breathing.

An overdose that stops breathing can result in a buildup of carbon dioxide, causing the heart to beat erratically and leading to cardiac arrest, said Dr. John Thistlethwaite, a member of the board of directors of the American Society of Anesthesiologists.

In recent months, Lee said, Jackson was worried about his sleep issues. "I had an IV and when it hit my veins, I was sleeping. That's what I want," Lee said Jackson told her.

Nurse warned Jacko

"I said, 'Michael, the only problem with you taking this medication' — and I had a chill in my body and tears in my eyes three months ago — 'the only problem is you're going to take it and you're not going to wake up,'" she recalled.

According to Lee, Jackson said it had been given to him before but he didn't want to discuss the circumstances or identify the doctor involved.

"He said, 'I don't like drugs. I don't want any drugs. My doctor told me this is a safe medicine,'" Lee said. The next day, she said she brought a copy of the Physician's Desk Reference to show him the menus on Diprivan.

"He said, 'No, you don't need it's safe. It works quick and it's safe as long as somebody's here in monitor me and wake me up. It's going to be OK,'" Lee said.

Reports from AFP and AP

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OPINION

Totaled

THE DECISION OF TOTAL INFORMATION MANagement Corp. to withdraw from its partnership with Smartmatic International Corp. leaves the automation of the 2010 elections all but totaled. Now the critical questions is: What is the Commission on Elections prepared to do, to salvage something useful from the wreck?

EDITORIAL The Comelec has imposed a gag order on both joint venture partners, in an apparent bid to keep recriminations talks on track.

We can understand the Comelec's excess of caution; any party in this marriage of convenience may say something in public that will prove impossible to live down. But it is clear that the partners are talking—to other parties.

Smartmatic has been talking, through its lawyers. That's the import of Mikhail Bey, Trudeau Lorrin Jr.'s forceful intervention in the media the other day. In this view, the central issue is extortion, plain and simple. TIM wants Smartmatic to pay it P580 million up front, or else. The public issue is election fraud. In Lorrin's words: "The opponents of automation who are all manners of mischief cheating got to the local partner who wanted Smartmatic to give him up front half a billion and control of the money of the joint venture."

TIM has been talking, too, through anonymous sources. That's the import of news reports like those filed by Doris Dumlao of the Inquirer and Artes Ruth of NewsInfo. In this view, the central issue is control of the joint venture. The partners are fighting over two provisions in the proposed contract with the Comelec, in particular: the designation of the joint venture's chairman, and the designation of Smartmatic, the "provider with the greater track record in automated elections, [as the party which] shall be in charge of the technical aspects of the counting and canvassing, software and hardware, including transmission configuration and system integration."

The public issue, from the TIM viewpoint, is exactly similar to that seen from Smartmatic's vantage: election fraud. As the lead paragraph in the business story read: "Local information technology provider Total Information Management Corp. (TIM) had backed out of a joint venture for election automation, fearing the deal gave its foreign partner unbridled power that could lead to potential abuse, according to an industry source close to TIM."

This much is clear: The prospects for automating the 2010 elections have dimmed, or they may already be dying out. The Comelec has given the two partners until tomorrow to thresh out their differences (differences, incidentally, which ought to have been resolved even before the Smartmatic/TIM consortium entered the bidding process). But given their revelations of possibly criminal behavior—extortion on the one hand, computerized fraud on the other—should the Comelec force them into a shotgun marriage?

We think the Comelec under its chairman, Jose Melo, should give it a try, but on the understanding that the joint venture meets certain conditions. Given the crucial importance of the electoral franchise, the Comelec may be within its rights to insist on open-book transparency from the partners—to know how much TIM, for instance, will stand to profit if the deal proceeds. If, for any reason, Melo and the other commissioners become convinced that these and similar confidence-building conditions cannot be met, then the Comelec must consider the alternative.

Taking a leaf from the Department of Foreign Affairs, it can enter into a partnership with Smartmatic itself. Or, heeding the advice of former Comelec Chair Christian Monsod, it can prepare for partial automation. Or it can ask the losing bidders to consider joining a shorter, much-expedited bidding process. Two of these bidders have already signified interest in joining such a process, if the contract would be ready by the middle of this month.

In any of these alternatives, the Comelec must be ready to be completely transparent, to be even more open than in the original bidding process. That is the only way to win back the full confidence of an already wary, deeply-bruised country electorate.

The important thing is to press automation forward—without, however, neglecting preparations for a possible return to a manual vote.

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Sphinx country

VIEWPOINT

Juan L. Mercado

DAILY, PRESIDENT MACAPAGAL-ARROYO IS enrolled with "will you won't you" questions. She has responded with coded silence. Just like the Sphinx?

Greek mythology tells of a winged creature, half lion and half woman. Wrapped in silence, the Sphinx devoured those who failed to answer its riddles.

Will Ms Arroyo seek a Hamjonga congressional seat? That riddle keeps former President Fidel Ramos and friends. Silver, mapped as a United Nations. "No President should chase her plans with the notion and piety of yes ma'am followers."

Convinces he pleader hasn't diluted former President Joseph Estrada's guilt. He, too, demands that the riddle be answered. But then, defenders and Erap rarely met in a long social-distanced event.

"Can you become prime minister, given the massive opposition to Charter change?" others wonder aloud. The partisans read: "Are you running for future exile haven in Barbados, Brunei or Dubai?"

Ms Arroyo, unremovable, adopted the late President Ronald Reagan's style to stare press conferences. "Before I refuse to answer questions, I have a statement to make," Reagan would tell assembled journalists.

He last met visit to Cebu, Ms Arroyo staff noted pertinent, if loaded, questions. Only then did the President set down her statement. In Tokyo, she snapped "political questions" cold in their tracks. "Kung ano ang sinong, sinong sagot." the Filipino proverb says. As the question, so will the answer be.

Literature now tripped him, of course, a test soon. "How long will you keep on resisting?" fuming Pharisees told an import named Galilean. He ignored their demand for credentials and referred them to his deeds instead.

"A beautiful and silent Sphinx has watched me." Through the drifting planes," Dream Weaver notes. "Intolerable and irresistible she does not rate." The does not stir."

Fine. But is absolving corruption?

Ask Senate President Juan Ponce Enrile. He's inching to pull Presidential Commission on Good Government Chair Camilo Sabio. The PCGG chair trumped all over Europe. He brought the fleeing family photo hangover on. Did the PCGG vice-president? Then, like coconut oil fume, pick up the tab?

The riddle intrigues Enrile. Suspenses would raise like an answer. But Sabio would use Sphinx the Sphinx. "I'll answer questions of the proper time and at the proper forum," he told the Senators. That's palpable for sirens.

A riddle bothers former Senators Aquino Sr., Tolentino and Wigberto Tañada, along with his son Rep. Oscar Santos. Have corrosive levy funds, which belong to farmers, hijacked for San Miguel Corp.'s recent installations?

Congress like the Ateneo Permanent Association of Confessors did last sab the same question. All they got from government is Sphinx-like silence.

But what if the Sphinx stirs? Erap unbowed-mated like terrapin's capacity to go for the jugular. He lived to tell it.

For possible answers, look at the answers of power. Philippine Human Development Report 2009, for example, analyzes institutions and skewed patterns of power. They explain why reforms haven't transformed. So they hint at how the Sphinx cannot answer.

"Where is the root of all misery?" Congress is the "House of Rob," PEER says. For 2009, senators and congressmen hulled for themselves P200 million and P70 million, respectively. Pork barrel allocations bulked from P2.4 billion for Senate to P8 billion in 2008. The highest level occurred in election years: P9.2 billion in 2004 and P12.4 billion in 2007.

But that's just the party cash. The "big-ticket items" are found elsewhere, notably in "canteens." Lump sums are tucked into obscure corners of the nation's appropriations act. For this year, one lonely sums up to almost P224.4 billion. That's roughly 16 percent of the total budget of P1.42 trillion.

The broad categories include foreign-funded projects as well as confidential or intelligence funds. The Presidential Anti-Organized Crime Commission has a road half billion pesos in a one liner. The Department of Public Works and Highways has a P1.5 billion "mis liner" for infrastructure.

"Which of these one liners are actually backed by plans?" asks PEER. Or are they "simply cheekonomics funds?" That riddle is worthy of a Sphinx.

Congress boasts that it has "the power of the purse." The reality is that Malacañang has long usurped the wallet. Planned institutions, regions and other sheer incompetences bulge the cash with the President. "And whoever pays the piper calls the tune."

Reduced to arm-arm more level, crafting a budget ignores policy. Legislators merely build agencies to accompany for performance. In one year, 18 out of 44 agencies failed audits. Yet, not one was pulled up short.

"Budget discussions particularly in the House of Representatives deal with parochial concerns," PEER notes. "Questions about agencies' performance are asked only intermittently and superficially. Cost estimates of budget proposals are rarely challenged."

Justice Secretary Agnes Devanadera, meanwhile, announced that the government took fugitive Cesar Mancao into its fishy Witness Protection Program. Will this former cop finally sing? An answer is forthcoming as riddles about the Ester-Corbito murder? Who, for example, is "Bigoso"? Mancao's pens turned documents after the murder. Did these deal with the SSS Benavares stash scam?

Then, Imelda Garcia, who was Mancao's inspector, has lapsed into silence. Just like the Sphinx?

Email: jmercado@email.com.

Rules

THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros

IN THE US, he said, all, but that too was the wonder of it. There is no gap between law and enforcement. A ruling is made, it is enforced. That is true whether the case involves murder or duty. One court orders you to pay a fine, you There are no ifs, ands or buts about it. Or else, as in the case of debt, you have your properties seized. It's not just death and taxes that are inevitable there, the law is too. You will do what's you write in like. You want to practice law, that's the place to be.

He is currently reviewing to take the bar exams here this year.

Another friend, Gary (I'll just call him that, too), had an unforgettable experience. Coming home one night and eager to get to where he was, he broke the speed limit near his place. A couple of patrol cars jumped out of the bushes and, with sirens swirling, signaled him to stop. The cops asked him to get off his vehicle, and he did. They did an alcohol test on him, and he registered way past the allowable limit. He had been drinking beer that night.

Gary was a huge obvious story in California and earned a big house in the suburbs. It wasn't the first time he had drunk and driven there. A strong drinker, he figured he could always drive straight even after a solid night, and as he had so proved the traffic police had to let off nights. He Pinoys, he used to laugh, will always find a way. He Pinoys will always get by.

He didn't figure on getting impatient and zero-speeding. He was just a couple of blocks away from his house when he got pulled over. The cops asked him if he had been drinking, he noted of it, after he stopped out of the car, they put handcuffs on him. The news must have alarmed the neighbors because their lights popped up one by one and they passed through their windows to see what was going on. "I've never been more humiliated in my entire life," Gary said.

The drunkenness left him completely, and he felt more sober than a judge. Alas, not in were that would consider the things that measured alcohol intake. His ordeal did not end there. He was brought to the precinct and was made to spend a night in jail. He has not a minor license. "sang ma nang sasangin kung magkaso," and he had to spend several weeks afterward in driving school to get his license back.

Gary now preaches to the young the use of a designated driver or better still not drinking too much even with one, with the presence of a convict or an arsonist. His ordeal, he said, happened some years after 9/11, but he never thought of taking the sense of profiling. Not even while he was being fetched, handcuffed, and driven like a common criminal to the station. Emphasis on common—he felt even less than common. Maybe it was profiling, but he knew he was wrong. He knew he had stuff, the speed is no more no respectable politicians—up.

All in all, the experiences did not leave him bitter, it left him appreciative of how things were done where he was. The law applied universally, given a lapse or two. The law was enforced seamlessly, given a lapse or two. Driving school showed him no—he eliminates calm from all walks of life, from all shades and colors, from all stories of success and failure.

Of course, he means, outside looking in than law can look so stern, so forbidding, so appalling, so—ephemism. But in the end, he said, better that "inhuman" than than the way "human" can look home, the kind that had no eyes, the kind where blindness was universal. The kind where the next victim of the driver that got off her lover's drunk driving ended up being yours. Or your kid.

Good points, I thought, and wondered why some people made rules only as thought to obeying them.

Go manual now and make our machines in 2016

AS THE TENSION SMOTHERED BETWEEN Total Intervention Management (TIM) and the Barbados-based Smartmatic International Corp. collapses, the Commission on Elections under Chair Jose Melo appears to be trying to restore the relationship, using the threat of a law suit to get them to settle together. But as TIM knows, it looks like a hopeless endeavor. Although the Comelec is trying to do everything to save the partnership, it may be easier to let them go their separate ways rather than force them into a marriage of convenience that might succeed when the honeymoon is over. The PPCRV is correct in gearing up for a return to manual counting and the Comelec ought to do the same. Let's go back to manual counting, but prepare for automated elections in the next six years.

• • •

Many reasons are given for the breakup of the joint venture. The Filipino head of TIM allegedly demanded a huge bribe, while the latecomer Smartmatic had been awarded a contract by central recording, including disbursements of funds and employment of the technology, etc. In its suit filing yesterday, its representatives are being glib-ed. However, I cannot think the idea of a Filipino running the bidding procedures and control over electoral process. It doesn't require a genius to see the dangers in such a situation. But even as I argue for manual count for the 2010 elections, let me recall here briefly the 2008 election. Of the overall 50m ballots, the 24 percent of nearly 700 million eligible voters. About 1,000 out of the one million machines used malfunctioned and the voters in the affected 1,000 had to wait and their ballots again. But the recount process was so burdensome that the voters left in droves. Smartmatic claims that the glitches were fixed: 23 observers, and specially from President Obama, for the speed and accuracy of counting, in contrast to the many complaints in the recent US elections.

Political Tidbits

Belinda Olivares-Cunanan

But in the Philippines, we should do no less. We don't need sophisticated Western computers that folks at the grassroots may not even know how to use. We need machines that will work in our setting. And we have six years from 2010 to make its own voting and counting machines. I thought to myself: But this is the answer: we have to devise our own system adapted to conditions in our most backward provinces. In a row of about 1,000 per machine, they had voters queued up to look like a row between us and an adding machine. One writer described it as a "souped up adding machine." It's factory-operated and portable: the kind we need in our provinces where power can suddenly go out due to Nature's wrath or man's machinations.

• • •

In May 2009, according to Hate Magazine, India managed to hold an all-electronic election, using more than one million such machines for their 700 million voters. The machines were far from perfect. They were deemed vulnerable to "serial fraud," but minimized "wholesale fraud" such as what happened in BEC in the 10th general elections in India last April and May this year. Some 380 million of the 714 million eligible voters. About 1,000 out of the one million machines used malfunctioned and the voters in the affected 1,000 had to wait and their ballots again. But the recount process was so burdensome that the voters left in droves. Smartmatic claims that the glitches were fixed: 23 observers, and specially from President Obama, for the speed and accuracy of counting, in contrast to the many complaints in the recent US elections.

Cha-cha right or wrong? Depends on objectives

THE IS A FUNCTION TO THE WHYS AND WHATS. Whether constitution may be over-economic," (PHOTOS, 06/05/09) The news item made mention of a warning: "A legislator's initiative to rewrite the Philippine constitution may push the stalling economy into overtime, a senior aide to President Arroyo warned Friday."

On the one hand, the plan of the administration and its allies to overhaul the building-up of a constitutional assembly (Con-ass) —which critics say is being pursued to perpetuate the stay of Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo in Malacañang and to allow foreign investors to own land—may not be a bad thing, that is, if they have a change of heart and have the following objectives:

1. To create an atmosphere conducive to sustained economic momentum that may be considered the result of the per capita GDP of $3,300 in 2008, and at least a 36 percent growth rate assessed for 10 years more or less that will equal That land's 2008 per capita GDP of $8,500 in 2009—although by then, Thailand is expected to have gained much higher ground.

2. To promote participatory governance for contravention to elite governance that will reduce poverty and attain social equity by increasing the productivity of the people, particularly the marginalized sectors, such as the farmers, fisherfolk and urban poor, thereby plugging them in a comfortable post-industrial society to participate effectively in natural resource and environmental protection. To achieve this and fill the notion from a state of inertia, the country needs a new breed of leaders (both in government and civil society) who are competent and service-oriented.

If these are not objectives of Ms Arroyo and her allies' in pushing for a Con-ass and Charter change, then the Filipino people have the right to oppose and oppose, by all means.

—EDMUNDO ENDRIZ,
edendrews@yahoo.com

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LETTERS

'Palakasan' puts underserving in juicy positions

ALL THREE BRANCHES OF THE GOVERNMENT are ill with the cancer of "palakasan." This explains why mediocre but fortunate presidential appointees get juicy positions that they do not deserve in the first place. Whatever happened to the merit and fitness system of the civil service?

It has been said: aside by the much-abused cliche "wide latitude of discretion of the appointing authority," which in practice is used (and abused) by the powers that be to exercise wild latitude of indiscretion, told to this the "transparent prerogative," hence the emergence of the hordes of appointees flouting the rules of all government institutions even if their positions are not in the plantilla.

Obviously, are the Department of Budget and Management, Civil Service Commission, Commission on Audit, Office of the President, Career Executive Service Board and other concerned agencies sleeping on the job?

Mind you, the Supreme Court has punished this many times. It's therefore not surprising to see the bureaucracy to shambles as more bad eggs get hatched and a number of the true good eggs get eaten up by this cancer. (If you can't kick them, join them.)

The best example of a resident of the ranch system and of a perpetrator of positions or patronage system is the current head of state herself, took despite massively government agency and poor still find precedent. Many of her appointees were elected from offices because they're "bata-alay si Mama, e ito ito" Their positions are not plantilla-based; they do not even have civil service or career executive service eligibility.

How can we hold ministerial calls to the Bureau of Customs, Bureau of Internal Revenue, Bureau of Immigration, Department of Foreign Affairs, Department of Agriculture, Department of Public Works and Highways, Department of Health, Department of Education, Department of Environment and Natural Resources, Department of Trade and Industry, Department of Tourism, Department of Energy, Department of Transportation and Communications, Department of Labor and Employment, Department of Social Welfare and Development, Department of Interior and Local Government, Department of Justice, Department of Finance, Department of Agrarian Reform, Department of Science and Technology

Across the NATION

Espinosa killer in prison breach

NEWSBRIEFS

■ BAGUIO CITY

NPA: Free Baliwag

THE COMMUNIST PARTY of the Philippines (CPP)/New People's Army (NPA)-Cordillera Peoples Democratic Front (CPDF) has called for the release of ailing Bible seminarian-leader Jeremias Baliwag Sr., who is being held on murder charges along with his wife and son at Camp Crame in Quezon City.

Baliwag, 71, received the news but would not be confident in his health," Simon "Ka Filo" Nacnac, CPDF spokesperson, said in a statement.

Police arrested Baliwag, 58, also known as "Ka Tody" and "Ka Dano" in the New Peoples Army, in Barangay Camp 7 in Baguio City on May 18. He was linked to the Dec. 28, 2006 killing of his brother, former rebel priest Conrado Baliwag in Mabitang, Nueva Ecija.

His wife Carmen should also be released because she was undergoing medical treatment for illnesses, while his son, Jeremias Jr., has long been tracked by the NPA after he left the CPDF, Nacnac said. *Delmar Cabisa, Inquirer Northern Luzon*

■ COTABATO CITY

Blast probe

THE MORO Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) has called for an independent probe into the series of bomb attacks that hit Central Mindanao the past weeks.

The military, which claimed that "rogue" MILF leaders were in explosions were behind the attacks as desperate moves to sow chaos and undermine the government's campaign following Monday's blast in Maguindanao that killed two civilians and wounded eight others.

Bomb attacks in bus terminals and crowded thoroughfares are "diversionary tactics" of the MILF under Ismael Sinkaru Bato, according to Col. Antonio Parayno spokesperson of the Armys 6th Infantry Division. *Charlie C. Zaliman and Agudito Z. Jones, Inquirer Mindanao*

WAITING FOR THE SUN In the fishing community of Sitio Calabtoan in Barangay Talisay, Calatrava town, Romblon, people have no choice but to stay on the island for days until the sea calms.

By Tarra Quismundo and Johanna W. B. Garga
Inquirer Southern Luzon

FOR ONE MURDER CONVICT, escape was as casual as jogging out of jail.

A former vice mayor of Masbate City locked the provincial jail where he was serving quadruple life terms for killing former Masbate Rep. Moises Espinosa Sr. in 1980 by simply exercising his morning exercise routine outside the facility, and jogging to a friend's house.

Florencio "Jun" Fernandez shared his flight plan to reporters at Camp Crame in Quezon City yesterday a day after he surrendered to former Masbate Gov. Rene Bendijo, who, in turn, informed Camp Crame officials. The warrant cited threats to life.

"They allow me every 4:30 a.m. to go outside the gate, then I jog near the Jaidee hall (adjacent building). I just continued until I reached the street, and then I jogged until I reached my friend's house," Fernandez said in a press conference at the Philippine National Police (PNP) headquarters yesterday.

Fernandez fled from prison at around 4:34 a.m. on June 22 and moved around the houses of five friends in Masbate City while trying to evade a nationwide hunt by police and jail officials.

Police requested the Davao helicopters to bring the fugitive from the Masbate airport, where Espinosa was killed 30 years ago. He took a Cebu Pacific flight to Manila.

"This is a reinforced case ... and if I remember right, the [Espinosa] ambush was also in the Masbate airport itself and we also know of incidents happening in Masbate specially the involvement of [communist insurgents]," said PNP Director General Avelino Razon.

Fernandez told reporters that he escaped because the Espinosa family wanted to get back at him. The killing happened amid bitter rivalry among the Espinosa and Bermudez political families in the province.

"All I know is they want me dead as retribution for what happened in their relative," Fernandez said.

Mayor Eugenio Espinosa, former presidential assistant for flood affairs and son of the slain Espinosa, expressed surprise over the VIP treatment given to Fernandez.

Gun ban on Boracay, Guimaras planned

ILOILO CITY—The PHILIPPINE NATIONAL POLICE will bar the unauthorized carrying of guns on Boracay Island as part of measures to tighten security and stem violence in the country's top tourist destination.

Chief Supt. Isagani Cuevas, Western Visayas police director, said in a statement that his office was finalizing plans for the implementation of the ban on the 1,032-hectare island.

He said the measure was included in a comprehensive plan to improve peace and order and to avert terrorist attacks on tourist destinations.

Similar steps will be undertaken on Guimaras Island, another tourist destination in the Visayas.

The ban will cover all persons entering the island and off-duty security guards and law enforcers.

Off-duty security guards, especially those outside the scope of their assignment, will be prohibited from carrying firearms.

The ban will also cover policemen and members of the Armed Forces who are not in uniform, as well as the security aides of politicians and officials.

Law enforcers will not be allowed to carry firearms on the island unless they are authorized by senior orders.

"We want to be strict on this plan because Boracay Island is a resource that we have to protect," Cuevas said.

Policemen will be detailed at ramports, especially at the Caticlan port, the jump-off point to the island, to check all persons going to Boracay.

Violent clashes over land disputes in Boracay have been on the rise in recent years, mostly involving security guards of land claimants and property owners. *Nestor B. Burgos Jr., Inquirer Visayas*

11 soldiers face raps for obstruction of justice in killing of 4 in Davao

DAVAO CITY—POLICE ARE READYING charges against 11 soldiers for alleged obstruction of justice even as local authorities called for a deeper investigation into shooting incidents in Sta. Tomas town in Davao del North province Tuesday that left at least four people dead.

Senior Supt. Jose Pante, provincial police chief, said members of the Army's 60th and 72nd Infantry Batallions would be investigated to determine their possible role in the carnage along Feeder Road 3, Barangay Sto. Niño at past 9 a.m., after armed men reportedly tampered with evidence at the crime scene and removed the body of one fatality.

Killed were PO1 Pete Hamadan, assigned to the 3108th provincial mobile group in Panabo City; Cpl. Arnold Tortana, detailed at the intelligence section of the 72nd Infantry Battalion; Amor Gonzalvo, a member of Barangay Palma Gil, Bislig City, Surigao del Sur; and an unidentified resident of Davao City.

Gonzalvo's truck helper was seriously wounded and brought to the hospital.

Gen. Rodolfo del Rosario called the shooting "very embarrassing."

"It might send a wrong signal [to the public] that it was a police-military encounter. I am urging the police and the Army to disown our whatever problem the incident could result into," Del Rosario told reporters on Tuesday. He refused calls by civilian leaders for an investigation.

'Sketchy' details

Pante said details were "still sketchy." He said police were still gathering witnesses and other pieces of evidence for them "to come up with a clearer picture."

He said the police could not yet determine if it was Tortana who shot Gonzalvo and his helper.

According to witness and police accounts, Gonzalvo, who was also engaged in logging, and his helper were fired at by several men as he disembarked to flee Tortana's truck proper.

Hamadan, who had just left the municipal police station after processing the documents of a policeman-uncle who had also been gunned down a month ago, responded upon hearing the burst of gunfire. He was reportedly shot dead by Tortana.

Pante said Tortana was killed by responding policemen after he tried to fire with a companion on a motorcycle.

The [Tortana] were killed a grenade as the approaching police mobile cab, damaging a part of the vehicle," Pante said.

"We want to clarify though that until now, we have yet to ascertain who really shot the village councilor and his companion," Pante said.

The irregularity happened after a group of soldiers insisted on taking the body of Tortana despite the protests of policemen guarding the crime scene, Pante said.

The soldiers were able to remove the slain soldier's body and other pieces of evidence.

"It was as if these soldiers did not respect the police and so, civil leaders," Vice Mayor Daniel Lu said.

Lu said many residents expressed alarm and fear, and had asked for an "overhaul" of the 72nd IB.

Despite what happened, Pante said coordination and cooperation between the police and the army against the communist threat would continue.

He said that this was just an "isolated incident" and cannot nothing as relations between the two government defense organizations had been scarce.

Release

Pante on Tuesday ordered that the 11 soldiers be placed in custody for investigation, but they were released later after meeting saw of their officers, Lt. Heilbron Sangalang.

Sangalang was Tortana's immediate superior.

Lt. Col. Victor Tan, commanding officer of the 72nd IB, confirmed on Wednesday that it was Sangalang who led the group of armed men who took Tortana's body.

He said he has placed Sangalang under investigation and had restricted the junior officer in camp.

He confirmed that Sangalang was among the 11 soldiers being investigated by the Davao del Norte police.

A police source said 11 of those who could be charged were soldiers from the 60th IB.

"We leave it to the PNP [Philippine National Police] to investigate," Tan said, adding that Sangalang and Tortana "acted on their personal capacities and not because of a sanction from the battalion" or from any other high-ranking officers. *Priscilla Lim, Inquirer Mindanao*

Philippine International Trading Corporation

PITC

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

SUPPLY AND DELIVERY OF BRAND NEW WEAPON ACCESSORIES

(Bid Ref No. 2009 – 042 (NCB))

1. The Philippine International Trading Corporation (PITC), Philippine Army (PA), and Philippine Air Force (PAF), intend to apply the sum of TWENTY EIGHT MILLION ONE HUNDRED NINETY FOUR THOUSAND TWO HUNDRED FORTY SEVEN PESOS AND 00/100 (₱28,194,247.00) being part of the budget for the Contract (ABC) to payments under the contract for SUPPLY AND DELIVERY OF BRAND NEW WEAPON ACCESSORIES, more particularly described as follows:

Item	Quantity	Description	ABC (Php)	FUNDING SOURCE	Bid Security (Cash, CC, MCSD, LC*	Bid Security (Bank guaranty)*	Bid Security (PCIC Surety	Cost of Bid Documents
For PHILIPPINE ARMY								
1	24,000 pcs	Brand New Magazine Assembly for M16 Rifles (30-rds capacity) each	18,000,000.00	2009 AFP CF 02 Dec. 2008	540,000.00	270,000.00	900,000.00	5,000.00
For PHILIPPINE AIR FORCE								
2	1.5 Kilos	Brand New Magazine Assembly for M16 Rifles (30-rds capacity) each	5,000,000.00	2009 AFP CF 02 Dec. 2008	90,000.00	150,000.00	175,000.00	1,000.00
3	1.5 Kilos	Brand New Magazine Assembly for M16 Rifles (30-rds capacity) each	5,000,000.00		90,000.00	45,000.00	52,500.00	1,000.00
		TOTAL	Php 28,194,247.00		Php 720,000.00	465,000.00	1,127,500.00	15,000.00

*Only those issued in accredited local commercial commercial banks

2. Bids received in excess of the ABC shall be automatically rejected at bid opening.

3. PITC, PA, and PAF now invite Bids from eligible Bidders for SUPPLY AND DELIVERY OF BRAND NEW WEAPON ACCESSORIES (GOODS). Delivery of the GOODS is required to ninety (90) calendar days from receipt of Notice of Award/Order to Proceed, or opening of Letter of Credit whichever comes later. The description of an eligible Bidder is contained in Section II of the Bidding Documents, hereinafter referred to as Bidders Eligibility Requirements.

4. Bidding will be conducted through open competitive bidding procedures using non-discretionary pass/fail criteria as specified in the IRR-A of Republic Act 9184 (R.A. 9184), otherwise known as the "Government Procurement Reform Act," and is restricted to Filipino citizens/sole proprietorships, organizations with at least sixty percent (60%) interest or outstanding capital stock belonging to citizens of the Philippines.

5. Only Bids from Bidders who pass the eligibility check will be opened. The process for the eligibility check is described in Section II of the Bidding Documents, hereinafter referred to as the "Lowest Calculated Bid (LCB)" shall refer to the bid passing the post-qualification stage in order to firmly determine capabilities of the bid to technical and financial requirements of the project. The contract shall then be awarded to the Lowest Calculated and Responsive Bidder (LCRB) who was determined as such during the post-qualification process.

6. Interested Bidders may obtain further information from AGC Secretariat at 4/F MDC Building, 710 Santolan Street, Sabang Village, Makati City and inspect the Bidding Documents from 8:00 AM to 4:00 PM, Mondays to Fridays from July 02 2009

7. Bidding Documents may be purchased by interested Bidders from the address below and upon payment of a non-refundable fee as indicated above. The Bidding Documents shall be received personally by the prospective Bidders or his duly authorized representative.

8. PITC shall hold a Pre-Bid Conference open to all interested parties on July 10, 2009 at 10:00 AM at 4/F MDC Building, 710 Santolan Street, Sabang Village, Makati City.

9. Bids and eligibility requirements must be submitted on the inaugural date/time located at PITC Lobby, MDC Building, 710 Santolan Street, Sabang Village, Makati City on or before July 24, 2009 at 10:00 AM. Late Bids shall not be accepted.

10. Bid opening shall be on July 24, 2009 at 10:00 AM at 4/F MDC Building, 710 Santolan Street, Sabang Village Makati City. Bids will be opened in the presence of the Bidders' representatives who choose to attend at the address below. Prospective Bidders may submit their proposals, if any, in writing to the PITC Secretariat through No. 10, 2/F PITC Inc. 4th and final floor not later than 10:00am prior to deadline & submission of Bids Deadline.

11. PITC reserves the right to accept or reject any Bid, to annul the bidding process, and to reject all Bids at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected Bidder or Bidders. It is the intention to have all proposals submitted by the lowest responsive bidder/s as indicated through no fault of its own. (UPPER) Double Sec. (LOWER) dated January 20, 2009.

(SGD.) MA. VICTORIA O. MAGUIGAD
Chair, Bids & Awards Committee

Postings on July 02 to 08, 2009
SUPPL PITC BAC Website & Bulletin Board
Ads @ Philippine Daily Inquirer on 02 July 2009

INQUIRER Southern Luzon

NGO donates calamity-proof school building

By Roy M. Macol
Tabaco City

WHEN MEMBERS OF THE TSU Chi Foundation visited Albay after Supertyphoon "Reming" devastated the province in 2006, they wanted to help the Tabaco National High School (TNHS) by renovating its old building with a P2-million budget.

But when they informed their founding head, Master Cheng Yen, about their plan, he wanted nothing of it.

"He said we must give more a new building because the children are the hope of all parents and education is the hope of all children, so we have to give the best to the school," explained Tony Jao, Shed coordinator of the foundation. The Tabaco-based group instead opted to construct two earthquake-resistant and calamity-proof buildings because they wanted to be sure that the children in the Philippines and in Taiwan.

Turnover

On June 26, the foundation turned over a Taiwanese-patterned and quake-proof building to the TNHS.

"The school building was withstand to 9 degrees of up to Original No. 6, if there is such a thing, and earthquakes is strong as Intensity 8 or 9. That is why we built this one just for the children but to also serve as an emergency shelter to the residents around the area during strong typhoons and other calamities," he said.

"We call this typhoon-proof and earthquake-proof building because that was really the concern of our master. That no one should be hurt, whoever stays in this building," he explained.

The building's foundation is strong and its strength, surrounded, according to engineer Alberto Li, president of the Buddhist Compassion Relief of Tzu Chi.

A Taiwanese, Li said the materials and processes used were strictly followed based on structural design specifications.

Center pagoda

The building has a floor area of 1,400 square meters and houses 10 classrooms, two offices, four toilets and a center pagoda to serve as a convergence hall.

Construction started in June last year and was finished last May.

"This is the first school building we donated to the Philippines," Li said.

"We have donated rehabilitation and recreation and also have one clinic in Marikina but for school, this is the first time in the Philippines and I so hope that will not be the last," he said.

He disclosed that funds for the school building, as well as the foundation's other projects across the country were donated by kind-hearted people all over the Philippines. One of the main donors is Liberty Commercial Center (Luminarias), a chain of malls and express markets in Bicol.

Mayor Rebel Lagman-Luistro, who attended the turnover ceremony, said Tabaco City was very lucky to have such assistance.

Jao encouraged the city residents to also share the love to their fellowmen. "Our objective is to continuously spread the seed of love and kindness, while we are still capable."

THE TYPHOON-RESISTANT and quake-proof building donated by the Tzu Chi Foundation to the Tabaco National High School in Tabaco City

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dti CLARIFICATIONS OF CERTAIN CLAUSES OF DTI DAO 9, Series of 2008

DTI MEMORANDUM CIRCULAR NO. 7

FOR: DTI REGIONAL AND PROVINCIAL DIRECTORS
ALL MANUFACTURERS, IMPORTERS OF PRODUCTS UNDER DTI MANDATORY PRODUCT CERTIFICATION/SCHEME AND ITS DEALERS, DISTRIBUTORS, RETAILERS AND ALL CONCERNS

(Attention)

FROM: ATTY. VICTORIO BONIFACIO A. CIRAGAN
Director III-Consumer

SUBJECT: REGISTRATION OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF IMPORT COMMODITY CLEARANCE SCHEME UNDER DAO NO.9, SERIES OF 2008

DATE: 11 June 2009

This is to inform all concerns of the co-existence of and strict implementation of the Department Administrative Order No. 9 Series of 2008. The rules and and regulations concerning the issuance of Import Commodity Clearance under the Product Certification Bulk Scheme of the BPS. Please find the details below.

1. POSTING AND SUBMISSION OF SECURITY BOND

1.1 Starting 01 July 2009, the importers shall post a bond equivalent to One Hundred Fifty Thousand Pesos (PhP 150,000.00) per shipment as an assurance that no violation of the terms and condition of the certificate and the relevant rules pertaining to the issuance of the Import Commodity clearance for a particular shipment. The full implementation is in accordance with the provision of DAO 9,2008 in sections 5.1, 5.4.1.1 and 10.4.

1.2 Any violation of the terms of condition of the Certificate clearance means forfeiture of the security bond in favour of the government.

1.3 Security Bond shall be issued in favor of the Republic of the Philippines and duly executed and shall be in any of the following forms:

1.3.1 Government Service Insurance System (GSIS) Surety Bond; or

1.3.2 Insurance company with current year accreditation to guarantee standing by National Insurance Commission

1.4 In case any violation has been committed forfeiture of bond proceeding shall be instituted by the BPS, DTI-Regional and Provincial Offices.

2. QUALITY MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

Prior to actual importation the importer must submit to the BPS, DTI Regional or Provincial Office either of the following:

2.1 A certification that the product manufacturer's management system has been certified to ISO 9001:2000 or its future amendment. This is in accordance with Clause 3 of DAO 9,2008. The BPS, DTI Regional or Provincial Office shall accept or reject the QMS documents.

The scope of the management system should include the manufacturing of products intended to be exported to the Philippines.

2.2 In cases of importations without QMS documentations, the importer shall submit a certification of the product conformity/quality of the shipment or quality management system certification which is duly authenticated by Philippine Consular Office.

3. SECURITY OF SHIPMENT/DENIAL OF THE ISSUANCE OF ICC

3.1 Upon Evaluation of the responsible person from the BPS, Regional and/or Provincial Office, any applicable provisions of clause 5 (ICC/CCC) 2008 shall be applied.

3.2 BPS or Regional and/or Provincial Offices may padlock the warehouse, seal the shipments or institute any other measures to ensure the shipment prior to the issuance or denial of the ICC.

3.3 In case of denial of the Import Commodity Clearance, BPS, DTI Regional and Provincial Office shall apply any of the provisions of clauses 9 of DAO 9, 2008. The DTI and the importers shall discuss that this affected shipment shall not be available in the domestic trade.

3.4 The importer has the option to re-export the product to the country of origin or destroy the shipments. In all cases, DTI shall supervise the re-exportation or destruction of the shipments.

3.5 Prior to destruction, appropriate documents shall be secured from relevant government agencies. All expenses shall be borne by the importers.

4. IMPORT COMMODITY CLEARANCE STICKER SCHEME

4.1 BPS, DTI-Regional and Provincial Offices shall ensure that all commodities with the Import Commodity Clearance starting January 2009 shall have the Import Commodity Clearance Sticker.

4.2 The ICC stickers are available only at the Bureau of Product Standards and the Regional and Provincial Offices which ensure that prior to the issuance of the ICC the quantity of the commodities should be accounted and ICC stickers shall be ordered at the minimum possible time. No ICC shall be issued without the corresponding ICC stickers.

4.3 The ICC sticker with the ICC number (to be printed by the importers shall be affixed to the commodities (except for single item and small items). No commodity shall be distributed in the local markets without the ICC sticker. It is the responsibility of the importer to ensure that ICC stickers are affixed accordingly. Likewise, distribution of retailers shall be supervised. Retail establishments offering commodities, although with valid ICC, but without ICC stickers affixed on the said commodities.

For the guidance of all concerns.

'A' grade for single-handed teacher

By Maricar Cinco
Cbillco Island, Romblon

MALMARY MOSCOSO may not be as blessed as other people, having been born without a left forearm. But she is surely full of grace, being the first schoolteacher in a remote village surrounded by mountains and the sea.

With her right hand, she holds a wooden pointer before the blackboard, writes lesson plans, and patiently teaches each of her 64 pupils at the Cobiliboan Elementary School in Barangay Talisay in Calatrava, Romblon, how to read and write.

"I really wanted to teach here. Most of the people here are illiterate so I can easily thank results as signature," says Malmary, 33, who grew up in this somewhat isolated community of about 350 families.

Built in 2000, the school is the only learning institution in Sitio Cobiliboan in Talisay. The nearest elementary school is in Mayamboan Island—ride to their population.

Disability

Malmary moved with her aunt at the tender grades until she finished high school. She moved to Odiongan town when she entered college.

"I used to come home only on Fridays and return on Sundays," she remembers. Traveling back and forth was expensive, she adds.

Odiongan, considered to be the second town of Tablas Island, is 90 kilometers from Cobiliboan on the mountainous route by pump boat.

Her parents sought this for a living, and when they failed to reach money, Malmary would peddle dry (tabayas) and gamay (bagoong). "I used my earnings to buy vegetables that I would resell. My earnings from that were for my school needs," she says.

It was even harder for her that people teased about her disability. "I was embarrassed when I was already in college and people made hard to me," Malmary says.

She recalls going to church to take the board licensure examination and "people wouldn't believe I am a teacher because of the way I look."

Among 10 siblings, Malmary is the only one who attained a college degree.

First classroom

In 2002, she started to work as a substitute teacher without a salary. A year later, the Department of Education district supervisor advised her to move back to Cobiliboan and open a school.

"They saw that most of the children here would not go to school because it was far to their bad weather to come to Talisay village," she says.

The first few months of classes were only for Grades 1 and 2 pupils and those were held in the chapel, Malmary says.

In 2006, the Cobiliboan Elementary School offered classes up to Grade 4. Those for Grade 5 was opened the next year and for Grade 6 that school year.

Ritchen Pedero, 23, was assigned to teach at the Cobiliboan Elementary School in 2008 to help Malmary.

"Since parents could no longer send their children to school in other villages, the students dropped out and resorted to working in farms or fishing," Malmary says.

Pedero, the school head, has classes in all grade levels in a single room. When Typhoon "Frank" hit the island 4 years ago, its wooden structure was washed out.

"We never given funds for the repair. We used the classes money and scrap lists them to put up another one," Malmary recalls.

Malmary handles Grades 1 to 3, while Pedero takes charge of Grades 4 to 6. Lessons are held in the mornings in both classrooms.

"At one grade level someone else arrives, I would move to the other side of the room to allocate lessons to one other grade level," Malmary says.

Classes in the dark

At a recent teachers' conference that the two attended, Malmary was appalled when they were asked to bring laptop computers. "I just thought to myself, how could we have a laptop when we did not have electricity to the first place," she says.

Cobiliboan never had electricity until the recently provided equipment for it. "It operates only from 7 to 9 every night. Each household pays P6 every night for the oil," Malmary said.

The residents used to devise portable lamps from tin cans and wastes from were converted from the police to Cobiliboan, she has you.

When the house were broken and

DESPITE having only one hand and no school's, poor roads, Malmary Moscoso is always a jolly teacher to about 30 students of the Cobiliboan Elementary School in Sitio Cobiliboan, Barangay Talisay, Calatrava town, Romblon.

PHOTOGRAPH BY ...

SPORTS
Editor Tonyboy Cruz Fernandez • Assistant Editor Francis T.J. Chiva

Kaka gets Madrid welcome, Gago's number

MADRID—KAKA (ABOVE) IN REAL MADRID'S LATEST "GALACTICO" era as the Spanish club gave the Brazil player a rock star welcome on Tuesday. Kaka will wear his predecessor Fernando Gago's No. 5 jersey. The Argentine will wear No. 6. Another "galactico," Cristiano Ronaldo, will be unveiled Monday. AP

RP shuttlers fall by the wayside vs foreign foes

By Marc Anthony Reyes

ONLY FOUR OF 26 FILIPINO SHUTTLERS made it to the next round in the fourth-seeded heavy losses yesterday at the start of the Singa Economic Philippine Grand Prix Gold at the Philsports in Pasig.

Rachel Rutchenko overcame an opponent from Mexico and blitzed Alvin Bermudez edged a fellow Filipina while two others waltzed over to the round of 32 in men's singles in a tournament Day 1 for the host country.

"We really prepared for that but the field is really strong," said national team coach Atlan De Leon after one of the country's top bet in women's singles, Aelita Castillo, bowed out.

The tournament features up-and-coming players from powerhouse countries like Indonesia, Malaysia and China.

The 15-year-old Castillo, multiple gold medalist in several Palarong Pambansa, succumbed to 11th seed Linda Zechiri of Belgium, 21-11, 21-8.

Another Filipina to succumb to advance with Mekhiene Ann Venice Alcala battling compatriot Vicky Ella Evardo on penalties.

The country's badminton heroes, siblings Antonio and Kantaphon Anacleto, drew fans in their respective doubles events.

Bacolodnon, a former national player, bottled Rui Pogut, 21-19, 21-11, while Montreal debutant Wilfredo Simonen, 21-17, 16-21, 21-18.

Janet Jessie, Ace Nej Montesa and Paul Jeremiah Go took a free ride in the next round after Singaporeans Wong Ji Long Derek, Ng Zong Bao Ji Chen Pangilinan Adv no-showed to show up.

Michael Fuellner and Darren Beiler bowed down to Indonesian youngsters Hendra Aprida Gunawan and Vita Marissa, 21-14, 21-19, in the mixed doubles.

The Filipinos managed to keep it close at 8-5 in the first set before the Indonesians pulled away behind Gunawan's touches.

The Indonesian appeared eager to finish off the Filipinos in the second set and produced early waves that allowed the lead to move within 14-13, but the visitors settled down to complete the win.

Castillo, the first Filipino singles player to get going, succumbed to jitters, giving up his many unforced errors and appearing totally defenseless against Turkish

SERENA Williams celebrates after defeating Victoria Azarenka in their quarterfinal match at Wimbledon. AFP

All-Williams or all-Russian duel looms

WIMBLEDON, ENGLAND—Wimbledon could be headed for another all-Williams final. Then again, it could be an all-Russian affair.

The Williams sisters are one round away from another Grand Slam championship showdown, but they will first have to get past Russian opponents to set up their eighth meeting in a major final and fourth in the Wimbledon title match.

"I would love it to be a Williams final, and as would she, "But then champion Venus said, referring to younger sister and two-time winner Serena. "That would be great."

Third-seeded Venus, going for her third straight Wimbledon championship, will be up against No. 1 Dinara Safina in Thursday's semifinals. Serena, seeded No. 2, will face No. 4 Elena Dementieva.

The Williams siblings go in as solid favorites. They have put on a clinic of power tennis so far, dusting why they have been the dominant force at the All England Club for most of the decade.

"I'm I feel incredible!" Venus said after blasting Agnieszka Radwanska, 6-1, 6-2, in Tuesday's quarterfinals. "I'd like to say yes, but I really do work at it."

Only once in the past nine years has there been a Wimbledon women's final that didn't feature at least one of the Williams sisters. That rare 2006 vision Serena was absent injured.

They have faced each other in three Wimbledon finals, including last year, Serena won the first two, in 2002 and '03. They are 13-10 in career meetings and have played in seven Grand Slam finals, with Serena winning five.

"Serena and I work really hard—that's the first point," Venus said. "And second, if it was so easy, we'd win everything. But it's not that easy."

The winners find the day off Wednesday, which was set aside for the men's quarterfinals.

Five-time champion Roger Federer, closing in on a record 13th Grand Slam title, was scheduled up first on Center Court against Argentine Juan Martin del Potro, a 6-foot-6 (2.00-meter) Great Ivo Karlovic followed by No. 3 Andy Murray of Britain against Spanish wild card and former world's No. 1 Juan Carlos Ferrero.

The Williams sisters have sailed through the draw as the withers dropping a set. Venus has lost only 20 games in four matches, Serena 20.

"We have a great game," Serena said after beating Slovenia Azarenka, 6-3, 6-3, on Tuesday. "We have a strong serve. We have pretty good returns. Just solid all-around court players. We both serve pretty well." AP

US duo ousts Alcantara, new partner

By Jaemion W. Pace

THE WIMBLEDON RUN OF THE THE country's only Grand Slam champion came to an end on Tuesday night (Wednesday in Manila).

Francis Casey Alcantara and new partner Nikola Ivoska of South Africa absorbed a 6-4, 6-4 loss to the fourth-seeded American pair of Evan King and Jesse Rudis in the first round of the boys' doubles competition.

The setback ended the Cagayan de Oro native's stint at the famous England grass-court event.

He also took an early exit in the boys' singles with a 6-2, 4-6, 6-1 loss to Australia Matthew Reardon on Saturday (Sunday in Manila).

Alcantara's bid for a second Grand Slam crowned crashes short his bench's victory in the Australian Open with partner Denis Cheng Peng of Chinese Taipei last January.

With Pearls, the 17-year-old Alcantara's duo lugged the doubles crown in the 45th Astrid Bowl Cluedebut, Belgian International Junior Championships in Belgium. The pair recently reached the second round of the French Open and the Wimbledon tune-up tournament AEGON International Junior Tennis Championships Roehampton.

Hsieh and compatriot Huang Liang-chi are favored in the No. 2 ranked pair when they take on American Mitchell Frank and Isaac Jackson Stevens.

The 17-year-old Alcantara has five doubles titles this year, including wins early reigning Philippine boys' singles champion Daniel Parellada of Sweden in the 18th Istrook Gatt Mentor's Cup ITF World Junior Tennis Championships in Malaysia and the 20th Mitrachinta Lanore International Junior Championships in Manila.

ALCANTARA. Inc., Wimbledon

Find something more outrageous

HE CAME PREPARED TO BE SURPRISED but got the shock of his life instead.

Pete Bernardo Simon, 46, a former national cyclist, learned that it was a crime to be poor in Philippine sports.

This was made clear to him on Tuesday.

The rude awakening came in Bernardo on his entry as a filed case hearing at the Quezon City Prosecutor's Office.

Bernardo, Boys Boxing is members of the Surigao Airports' Drivers Association, which he heads in Mandaluyong City, was still at a loss yesterday.

OK, he was not as poor as his older friends who rose from penury to become summoner's chambers seats in retiring the Time of Lances.

This band of gritty riders did not allow poverty to be an obstacle to their dreams.

Boxing did not have to be told this. Boxing is Pinoy no-frills battle-hop on the boxing ring, where sweating cold night with an empty stomach, before he found his golden glove to the mat.

Poverty may on be the main secret behind the opening success of these people.

But being poor definitely taught them to be more tenacious, focused, single-determined.

Then Boxing was told it was no good to be poor.

"Pang bata mo magsabi bata (Your bata cannot all this crookery)," Boxing was told outside Rm. 408C in the QC Prosecutor's

BARE EYE

Bryan Trinidad

Office.

"Bryab is not my bata, he's my uncle," he told his informant, Cesar Fibonpo, also a former national cyclist.

Fibonpo, together with Armando Bautista, has sued me for libel.

I blasted them after they muddled up the results of the last national cycling association election.

Anyway, Boxing now told Fibonpo point blank that there would've been no trouble, and they would not be meeting there, if they did not cryab and smear the legitimate election of Rolando Hoo, also a former national cyclist, as president of the Integrated Cycling Federation of the Philippines (PhilCycling).

Boxing, together with his side and ally Rick Bruno, summoned the official election of Hoo at the Aristocrats Seafood on May 9.

That poll was ordered by the Philippine Olympic Committee and supervised by a team headed by Go Teng Kok, chief assistant to the POC president.

For the record, there was complaint made had originally encouraged Hoo to run for the cycling post.

Boxing, as could be expected, proved Fibonpo can ruby-chary flunked up Hoo's official election.

"Wala naman palang pera (He's poor, period)," Fibonpo told Bernardo without batting an eyelash.

Boxing was stunned still, he told me later.

BYFibonpo had offered another reason. Boxing told he would've come up with a rebuttal.

But Boxing found Fibonpo's statement most totally outrageous.

He said it was criminal, unjustified.

For one, Boxing was with Hoo the day after his election when they went to Boxie, Bicol to prepare the layout for a contested tournament they held with the assistance of Mayor Willie Robles.

Boxing says there where Hoo used out a Pit then to the airport the Mall of Asia, where they have found could but or maybe a chosen for the pole in the area's Love Southeast Asian Games.

Hoo was also in the process of scoring Cooper Boxing, now a member of the US national cycling team, to race for the Philippines in Laos this December.

Meanwhile, removed Mikee Romero, who lost to Hoo in the May 9 election, was scheduled to be sworn in as the Ilocos Liga Ball at PhilCycling presidents yesterday noon.

Republic of the Philippines
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
Regional Field Unit 3
San Fernando City, Pampanga

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

Bicycle & Fishery of 100,000 pieces Cocos Seedlings under Coconut Farm Development and Productivity Program

The Department of Agriculture-Regional Field Unit No. 3 (DA-RFU3), Regional Center for Engineering, Coconut Farm Development and Productivity Program is the 3rd District of the Province of Bataan, Pampanga and Bataan, the agency is in need of 100,000 pieces of Cocos Seedlings for delivery to various beneficiaries in the Municipalities of Province of Bataan as follows:

Lot One: Municipalities of Orion, Pilar and Hermosa (Bataan)	— 50,000 Pieces
Lot Two: Municipalities of Balanga, Mariveles & Abucay (Bataan)	— 50,000 Pieces

The agency intends to apply the amount of **Eight Million Three Hundred Twenty Three Thousand Philippine Pesos (PHP 8,323,000.00)** as the total Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC).

Pre-bid Conference shall be held on July 13, 2009 at 1:30 in the afternoon, Conference Room, Administration Building. Any agency or the presence of prospective bidders and shall strictly adhere to strict observance of the pre-bid conference. Only prospective bidders who attended the pre-bid conference shall be allowed to submit bids.

Prospective bidders may obtain the Bid Documents from the Procurement Unit of DA-RFU3 for the amount of P1,000.00 non-refundable fee. Bid Documents shall be issued only to prospective bidders who attended the pre-bid conference and the Bid Documents shall be issued to the authorized representative of the prospective bidder.

Deadline for submission of bids is three envelopes will be on or July 20th before 9:00 a.m. in the morning. Opening of bids will follow on the same day and at 10:00 a.m. in the morning. Conference Room, Administration Building. Any agency or the presence of prospective bidders and shall strictly adhere to strict observance of the pre-bid conference. Only prospective bidders who attended the pre-bid conference shall be allowed to submit bids. Late bids shall not be accepted. Bids will be automatically rejected on the ground of non-compliance with the prescribed bid requirements.

Each bid must be accompanied by bidder's bond equivalent to any of the following issued in the Philippines in the form of: (a) Cash, Cashier's/Manager's Check, Bank Draft/Guarantee or Irrevocable Letter of Credit; 15% (Bank Guarantee or 20% Surety Bond.

The DA reserves the right to reject any and all bids, declare a failure of bidding, or not award the contract when so there is proof of collusion between the bidders. For BAC and any of the bidders, or if the collusion is between a bidder and a third party, including any act which restricts, suppresses or nullifies or tends to restrict, suppress or nullify competition by the BAC, or bidders or any other bidder, or if the prescribed bidding procedures, or in any guidelines and reasonable ground before the award of the contract will not redound to the benefit of the government or national; (c) if the physical and economic conditions have significantly changed so to render the project inappropriate, or impractical, or unnecessary, or (d) any other circumstance in the best of the procurement entity; (e) if the project is no longer necessary as determined by the head of the procuring entity; (f) if the delivery of funds for the project has been withheld or reduced pursuant to the Department of Budget and Management.

Further, the CURFU3 reserves its obligation whatsoever to compensate or indemnify the bidder who submitted or not that may incur in connection with the undertaking.

For more details, call or visit the BAC Secretariat, Legal Office (2nd flr., RFU3) Tel. 045-963-7, Telefax: 963-7, Cabanatuan City or log on to www.rfu3.da.gov.ph or http://rfu3.da.gov.ph. Tel. 963-7, Cabanatuan City.

(Sgd.) **JOSE V. SANTOS, DVM, CESO III**
Regional Executive Director

BUNCIO

Buncio collects four Superbikes trophies

REIGNING SUPERBIKES CHAMPION Mauro Buncio (100-Moto VRI Team) bagged four trophies recently in the 2009 IRC Superbikes Series and the 2009 Magnolia Health Tea Philippine Endurance Kings Championships at the Batangas Racing Circuit.

The 20-year-old Buncio not only posted a sweep in the Superbikes Series that also yielded a new track record time of 1:38.587 seconds.

With the win, Buncio fanned up his battle-tested slaught title as he won two of seven. He better than another rival Glenn Agustin's 91 points.

Another two his two Superbikes trophies, Buncio likewise captured the 125cc Open over Sonny Barangan and the 150cc Open over Jomie Bernal and third placer Jonsberry Enriquez.

WHITE HORSE - INSPIRING BEAUTIFUL HOMES IN PHILIPPINES

A Historic Brand

White Horse is renowned as one of the leading ceramic tile manufacturers in the Asia Pacific region today. Established in 1947, **White Horse** has over 30 years of tile manufacturing experience and established a brand that is synonymous with high quality and innovation in the ceramic industry. **White Horse** Taiwan and two leading tile companies from Malaysia and Singapore established **White Horse** Malaysia. These combined strengths set the standard for the region's tile manufacturing industry.

Set to expand its global presence, **White Horse** has manufacturing plants in Taiwan, Malaysia and Vietnam supported by worldwide distributing offices and warehouses in Taiwan, Malaysia, Singapore, Thailand, Philippines, Indonesia, Cambodia, Vietnam and Australia. Further, **White Horse** has successfully gained a stronger position in the domestic, regional and international markets with the combined production capacity of **White Horse** Taiwan, Malaysia and Vietnam reaching 60 million square metres per annum.

White Horse Today

The continuous pursuit for excellence has led to **White Horse** receiving numerous awards and accolades in recognition of product innovation, quality and service excellence. To date, **White Horse** Taiwan, Malaysia and Vietnam has achieved the prestigious ISO 9001 certification for quality management systems. In addition to being listed on the Main Board of Malaysia's Kuala Lumpur Stock Exchange, **White Horse** Malaysia has also received the 'Super Brand' status award, Malaysia National Creativity and Innovation Award and recognition by the Malaysia Book of Records for setting up 'Ceramic World' the largest tile showroom in Malaysia. **White Horse** Taiwan further received the Taiwan certification for Environmental Protection Award while **White Horse** Vietnam received The Saigon Times Top 10 Award 2004 and 2005 for Best Performing Foreign Direct Investment and Gold Awards from the Vietnamese Construction Industry in 2002 to 2005.

Cutting Edge Technology

White Horse invests in advanced technology that produces high-performance tiles. It is among the few tile manufacturers in Asia to adopt the latest technology and machinery from Italy to stay in line with international standards. Every step of its manufacturing process is governed by stringent quality control, where process automation and constant research and development further enhance overall performance. Each product is the result of extensive investment in the manufacturing system, machinery, research and development, detailed analysis of current design trends and an ongoing commitment to innovation.

White Horse in Philippines

Inspiring beautiful homes across Asia, **White Horse** in the Philippines marks another significant step for **White Horse** in expanding its horizons and fulfilling the needs of customers worldwide. The company strives towards attaining the vision of becoming a world-class leader in the premium tiles industry and an inspiration for dream homes in the hearts of customers in the Philippines. Customers can now enjoy the latest tile trends by **White Horse** available in a wide range of designs, shapes and textures as well as matching tile compositions for every part of the home, bringing the theme from the garden to the Philippines marked at Ms Jamie Rivera, Philippine's very own award-winning artiste and **White Horse** brand endorser, who shares a passion for **White Horse** tiles. The talented Ms Rivera has touched hearts all over the world with her music and charitable initiatives. She embraces the same qualities style, elegance, quality and inspiring beauty that define **White Horse** products.

White Horse is delighted to form a strategic alliance with Home Depot, the premier hub for the widest variety of high quality home building materials, hardware accessories and equipment in the Philippines. Being a brand that is synonymous with product and service excellence, this new collaboration marks a significant step for **White Horse** towards meeting all the needs of all clients from architects, engineers, interior designers, contractors, plumbers, dealer or homebuilding shoppers.

For the convenience of customers, **White Horse** tiles are available at leading home depot outlets in Bonifacio, Manila Bay, Alabang, Ortigas and Pampanga, and soon available at Alabang home depot. They are also available at Cebu Diehard Hardware Co., Inc located Lapu-lapu City and Mandaue City in Cebu. **For more information of White Horse Ceramic products and services, call the customer hotline at (632) 822 3381 or visit www.whitehorseceramic.com.**

Stags stun Red Lions; Chiefs ambush Knights

By Jeannine W. Paya

SAN SEBASTIAN SHOCKED THREE-TIME champion San Beda, 83-77, yesterday to grab the early lead in the 85th NCAA men's basketball tournament at the PhilSports Arena in Pasig.

Andre Aquino smiled off 16 of his 26 points from behind the arc, including three straight triples in the final period that helped the Stags send their second straight victory.

The Stags also drew a superb game from rookie center Ian Sangalang, who had 16 markers, 10 rebounds and two blocks.

"I told my players if we want to contend for the title we need to beat a champion team like San Beda," said team coach Aric Agcaoili after the Stags snapped a seven-game losing streak against the Lions that started July 13, 2005.

Giant-squad Arellano University completed the day-of-upsets at the Clash survived the Letran Knights' late rally in the second game for an 81-77 victory that propelled them on top with the Stags.

Gerapht Gregorio impressed with 17 points, including five straight in the final minute that kept the Chiefs afloat after the Knights threatened to 72-68.

"I told the team to just enjoy the game because we have nothing to lose," said Arellano coach Koji Minn.

Gregorio and Nicholas Uriarte combined to lift the Chiefs ahead by as many as 20 points, 69-26, in the second quarter.

Aquino, who averaged only 7.1 points last season, scored all his 12 points in the fourth quarter from three-point range.

A six-foot guard from Subic, Aquino posted his career-high against the Lions after draining 5 of 11 from beyond the arc.

The series scores:
First Game:

MAP STANDING (0) - Aquino (0) Sangalang (0) Salenga (0) Jimenez (0) Ramos (0) Mascariñas (0) Manuel (0) Raymundo (0) Pascual (0) Lumanlan (0) Del Rosario (0) Baguion (0)

SAN BEDA (0) - Gonzalez (0) Pascual (0) Lucero (0) Daniel (0) Jose Gerard (0) Tercias (0) Hernan (0) Mercado (0) Gamos (0) Espanol (0) Jerusalem (0)

Quarters: 20-25; 42-46; 63-63; 83-77

Second Game:

ARELLANO (0) - G. Gregorio (0) Uriarte (0) Ajoste (0) Mikaele (0) J. Gregorio (0) Buenaventura (0) Pedrajas (0) Dimaya (0) Aquino (0)

LETRAN (0) - Gonzales (0) Bolanos (0) A. Ayo (0) Jurado (0) Cortez (0) De Guzman (0) Ferreras (0) De Ala (0) Galban (0) Tadeo (0)

Quarters: 20-15; 47-35; 62-50; 81-77

SUBIC CONFERENCE
of 85th Flying V Arenas
T 6:00 — 2015
vs Pacquiao (Live)
9 p.m. — Ellorde
vs Dr. Bendijo (Live)

Spotlight on Japeth as RP five tests AIA

By Jeannine W. Paya

NATIONAL COACH YENG GUIAO LIKES what he saw when Japeth Aguilar hit the hardcourt for the first time with the Powerade Team Pilipinas.

Aguilar's test game will be put to a test today when the all-pro national squad takes on the visiting Athletic Association at 6 p.m. at the FEGS Flying V Arena in San Juan.

"We aren't really out to define this role in the team at the moment," Guiao said after the 6-foot-9 Aguilar joined the team's practice on Monday night.

"We'll watch him in the next few days, talk to him and just try to get him more comfortable with the system and the team."

Aguilar, who suited from the United States recently after a three-year stint with Western Kentucky University, will be surged against American imports also playing for US PECSA Division 1 squads.

"Coming from Division 1 schools in the US NCAA, the AIA players should provide us really with competition," said Guiao. "I believe we'll have our hands full against them."

"I'm trying to get refocused," said Aguilar, the son of former Ginebrino Cannibasket owner Peter Aguilar. "I know I have to work hard because I shocked personnel."

Hot the heat, 23-0-9, Aguilar made a good first impression when he showcased his shotmaking and shotblocking skills during the team's half-court 3-on-3 training.

"[Aguilar] is going to complement our running game," said Guiao of the former Ateneo standout, whom he described as the "mysterious most dominant big man."

"He's more mobile and get better footwork."

JAY Washington of San Miguel Beer tries to shake off Paul Artadi of Barangay Ginebra. The mini squads were playing Game 1 of the PBA Fruit's Cup finals as of press time. NONOY MACEDA

BK Whoppers whip Painters for 3rd place

By Mycong B. Cardillo

ARWIND SANTOS SCORED 27 POINTS and grabbed 13 rebounds in his final game of the season last night as Burger King rolled to an easy 103-1-08 victory over Rain or Shine to secure third place in the Chevrolet PBA Hoops Cup at the Araneta Coliseum in Cubao.

The leading candidate for the season-ending Most Valuable Player award was ably supported by six teammates, who scored in turn digits as the Whoppers exploited the absence of Elasto Painters' stars Gabe Norwood and Jay-R Reyes.

Norwood, the hands-down winner of the Rookie of the Year award, and Reyes were both nursing bruises, with Reyes still confined to a hospital. Norwood teared up but vowed Coach Caloy Garcia dividend not to play him anymore.

Mark Isip scored 26 points and Ryan Arana added 24 to pave the Painters, who made the semifinals for the first time.

"I think we completed Cardi[] in this conference," Burger King coach and National tutor Yeng Guiao said. "We put in the mentality that we want this team to have. We have something good to look forward to."

There was something good to look forward to indeed as Japeth Aguilar is reportedly set to turn pro and Burger King seemed sure to see the first pick overall on the 6-foot-9 former Western Kentucky University standout.

"If Japeth is applying for the draft, the way I see him, he's going to be the most dominant big man in the league, without a doubt," Guiao, who will handle Aguilar in the National team, said.

Gary David tossed in 17 points, while import Darnell Daniels had 16 points, 11 rebounds, four assists and three steals for the Whoppers, who lost in the title series to Barangay Ginebra last year despite taking a 3-2 lead in the series.

GAME TOMORROW
Araneta Coliseum
7 p.m. — San Miguel
vs Barangay Ginebra

The Whoppers opened up a 71-58 lead at the half and were never threatened.

Meanwhile, the Best Player of the Conference award will be handed out tomorrow, with Ginebra spitfire Jay-Jay Helterbrand heavily favored to score a repeat.

Gabriel Homawan of San Miguel is the leading candidate for the Best Import trophy won Daniel Santos of Barangay Ginebra.

Both teams were playing the first game of their best-of-seven championship series as preseries.

The Scores:

BURGER KING (0) - Santos 27, David 11, Daniels 16, Mallari 10, Isip 26, Arana 24, Ilustre 15, Yee 10, Hidalgo 0, Delgado, Arrodaza 0, Cruz 0

RAIN OR SHINE (0) - Ong 10, Arana 24, Lassiter 17, Lanete 14, Andaya 0, Tungcab, Ramos 7, Salamagos 5, Zamar 2, Ybanez 2

Quarters: 26-21; 51-48; 80-80; OT: 9-8

Philippines trips Iran, gains rugby finals

By Cedelf P. Tagao

THE PHILIPPINES LITERALLY CUT A tailor-used holiday Iran ripped down to size with a 37-12 victory yesterday and marched the final of the Asian Five Nations Rugby Series Division III tournament at the Nomads field in Bangkok.

The RP Volcanoes overcame a sluggish start before forging a Heads duel with Guam, which overpowered Indonesia, 19-3, in the other semifinal.

"It was a rough game because Iran did bring a lot of their weight into the game," said RP coach Mike Cullen. "But, at the end of the day our heart and skill showed."

The Filipinos relied on some overpowering plays to score two tries in the second half, the last coming in the 70th minute, when fly half Oliver Saunders found younger brother Matt.

The Volcanoes lashed the cowing edge to break through at the start as the Iranians served the first half was a rugby affair, subduing the pace with their size.

Oliver Saunders missed two long field goal attempts and brother Matt strayed offside just when he was a few yards from scoring in the 34th minute.

Iran II former Missouri University standout.

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Abap eyes UAAP stint

By Jeannine W. Paya

AFTER CHASING THE BUSTER OF THREE varsity leagues, the Amateur Boxing Association of the Philippines (Abap) is now pushing for the inclusion of boxing in the UAAP sports calendar.

"We're offering amateur boxing as a possible demo sport in the UAAP," said Abap executive director Ed Picson yesterday.

Boxing will be a demonstration sport in the NCAA starting this season as well as in the NCAA South and in the Private Schools Athletic Association (PSAA).

UAAP president Anna Montecillo of host De La Salle University said for an event to be included as a demonstration sport, at least half of its eight member-schools must be able to field teams.

'PSC-POC row won't affect nat'l athletes'

By Jane Nicanor

DESPITE THE RAGING FEUD BETWEEN the Philippine Sports Commission and the Philippine Olympic Committee, PSC chair Harry Roque has assured the national athletes that they won't be caught in the crossfire.

Arguing yesterday amid the training of the athletes for the December Southeast Asian Games in Laos should not be compromised by the ongoing war like conflict stoked more by the Olympic body.

"We will shield the athletes so that their performance in the SEA Games will not be affected," said Roque, who declined to make a prediction on the country's gold-medal chances in the biennial meet slated Dec. 9-18.

In contrast, POC president Jose "Peping" Cojuangco Jr. said Team Philippines could win 50 gold medals in the meet like in the ongoing squabble between the POC and the government sports agency.

Barcenilla earns GM result; Nat'l Open starts

ADD ROGELIO "BANJO" BARCENILLA JR. TO THE ELITE LIST OF Filipino Grandmasters.

Barcenilla, last on Rizal (2), led to one based in Arizona, Texas, booted Georgian GM Zviad Izoria to earn his third and final GM result in the recent Copper State International Chess Championship held in Mesa, Arizona.

The former Asian junior winner finished with 7 points after 10 games to the best work by 42nd GM Timur Gareev (Uzbekistan).

Barcenilla thus became the country's 12th GM after Eugene Torre, Jesse Antonio, Bong Villamayor, Melon Blandino II, Mark Paragua, Wesley So, Darwin Laylo, Jayson Gonzales, John Paul Gomez, Joseph Sanchez and the late Rolando Salinas Jr.

Barcenilla gained 11.5 points, boosting his rating to 2518 and vaulting to fourth place among top Filipino players still being led by best contender GM Mendoy So, with an all-time high of 2582 points.

So, by barely-kept second place with 2560 points, just a point ahead of Antonio, who made the biggest gain from 2518 to 2558 in the FIDE quarterly ratings released July 1.

Meanwhile, Layo, Paragua, Gonzales and Villamayor will lead the National Open chess championship starting today at the fourth floor of Rotary Centro Hotel in Monumento, Caloocan.

Taiwan golf: Fernando, Ababa secure team title

By Tonny Manatad

TAIPEI—JOSEL ABABA AND JESSIE FERnando contributed for an eight-over-par total Wednesday to give the Philippines the team championship in the prestigious Taiwan Amateur Golf Championships.

Ababa and Fernando, the National Golfers' Open producers who are currently the hottest amateurs back home, played with steady resolve under brutal windy conditions at the Hsinchu Golf Club here to prevail over a host of formidable foes.

Fernando, who won his first PJP Amateur title last month in Bataclan, fired a 75, while Ababa turned in a 77 as the Philippines totaled 301 for 36 holes to edge heavyweight Singapore by four shots and China by eight.

The duo, whose stint was backstabbed by the MCO, also made it safely to the final two days of individual play with Fernando ending 36-par Japan's pacesetting Dou Tai Huang by eight shots with a 149 aggregate and Ababa 11 strokes down with a 153 tally.

Winning the team championship was more than a consolation prize for the Filipinos, who beat some of the best teams in the region.

Competition for the individual champion-ship pair going with another Filipino, Alvin Bagtas, also still in the mix.

The finished contender was nine shots down after a 75.

Juvic fires 66, leads by three in Davao

JUVIC INGUSON ASSEMBLED A 10-UNder par 60 yesterday to take a three-stroke lead over veteran Aniceto Fernandez after the opening round of the ICTSI Philippine Golf Tour's Apo Classic leg at the rough Apo course in Davao.

Ingusion used the 5th down and-plane right of the day to the 6th, firing eight birdies against two bogeys to one of his finest performances since a slump left him struggling to post low scores this year.

It could have been a better performance for the former Asian Tour's rookie of the Year had he not missed the 18th green and muffed a five-foot putt for par.

Fernando fired a 65, hitting five birdies against a lone bogey as he repeated his hot start in the last leg of this circuit played at the Mulanyan course in Upo two months ago.

Veteran journeyman Ernesto Acosta, who won the Upo leg, returned a 71 despite muffing four birdie putts from close range.

He finished with rounds of 35-36 and led a group made up of Jerome Delantarie, Renato Vinluan, Edwin Jimenez, Elmer Salvador, Rhonn Quiachon and Asian Tour regular Antonio Bhanklumi Five shots off the pace.

Jay Bayron and fellow Davaoeño Elmer Salvan and Benjie Magadia matched par in easy within striking distance to the 54-hole front-runner.

Meanwhile, who beat Salvador by two shots here last year and the leading player in the early Order of Merit race, rallied with two birdies in the last three holes to salvage a one-over 73.

Mycong B. Cardillo

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Belo's surgeon faces raps for botched facial treatment

By Allison W. Lopez

A DOCTOR WAS ORDERED CHARGED WITH reckless imprudence resulting in serious physical injuries by the Makati City Prosecutor's Office for allegedly botching a facial procedure on a nurse.

In a three-page resolution, assistant national city prosecutor Edgardo Hitosis recommended the filing of criminal charges against Dr. Jennifer Roldan Sioson de Leon of the Belo Medical Group Inc. (BMGI), but at the same time junked raps against BMGI owner Dr. Hermie "Belo" Belo for lack of merit.

He said the culpable acts pertained exclusively to Sioson—not her employer—when she repeatedly failed to exercise caution during the radio-frequency procedure on Leila Dalupang in July 2008.

The 50-year-old nurse based in the United States, who underwent the skin-tightening treatment at the BMGI's Makati clinic, demanded P10 million in damages from the cosmetic surgeon when she sustained permanent scars.

Submitting pictures of her swollen and bruised face after Thermage, Dalupang said she suffered emotionally from the facial deformity.

In finding probable cause against Sioson, the prosecutor said the doctor admitted in her affidavit that she was only trained but not licensed to perform Thermage.

"Respondent Sioson, under the circumstances, is not just negligent but unjustly so. Sioson not only failed to act with due care in performing Thermage, she should not have performed it in the first place without any supervising certified Thermage practitioner," said Hitosis.

Sioson, he insisted, had the same ordeal once when the procedure was totally done to patients while awake so they could react to the heat being applied.

Also at the start of the procedure, she admits discovering a single and bumpy point on complainant's right zygomatic area. It should have cautioned her to proceed," stated the fiscal.

"She could have thereby opted to perform the procedure with the complainant awake. But she continued," he added.

A bail of P2,000 was recommended for Sioson, whose case will be raffled off at the Makati Metropolitan Trial Court.

DID YOU KNOW

9/11 (9/11 de Jesus (Philip of Jesus), patron saint of Mexico City, left his country for the Philippines in the 16th century and became a member of the Franciscan order in Intramuros. In 1596, he took the Mexico-bound galleon which was unfortunately driven by a storm toward Japan. There, Dr. Jesus and his fellow stranded passengers were suspected of planning to conquer Japan and were executed. *Cyril Abrahams Aquino Vasquez*

Laid-off workers reject offers

WORKERS OF TRIUMPH INTERnational (Philippines) Inc. who are about to be laid off will not accept their separation pay or any other offers from the company unless they are first presented proof that its impending closure is legal, an officer of the workers' union said yesterday.

Officials of the Bagong Pagkakaisa ng mga Manggagawa sa Triumph International have been huddling dialogues with management to stop the company from closing its sun factories effective on Aug. 28.

A total of 1,600 workers employed at the factories will lose their jobs as a result, along with 27 employees at the company's head office in Makati.

On the other hand, 120 people residing in the farm's sales and marketing division will not be affected.

"Until now, they still could not show us any documents about the closure. They just keep on telling us about the severance pay [we are going to get]," Isabelita delos Cina, the president of the workers' union, said.

She added that management was offering at least P300,000 for workers who have rendered 20 years of service.

Delos Cina said that she and the other union officials have told management that they would not discuss separation benefits unless they are provided with documents regarding the firm's closure.

"The closure was dubious because the filing of the closure [papers] with the labor department happened only on Tuesday (two days before the ban in operations)," she said, adding that under the Labor Code, workers should be given 30 days notice before the intended closure date.

The factories were closed on Saturday right after management declared a holiday.

Dela Cina pointed out that most of the workers about to be displaced are 45 years old and above and would thus find it very hard to find new jobs.

She said that what she and the others need right now is "job security." Alena Guillerviler Gallejo

MMTA MOVIE GUIDE

NOW SHOWING

Walter Mart

Speeding truck kills cop

By Yvark Santos

A POLICEMAN ON A MOTORcycle was killed after his van struck by a speeding truck in Ermita, Manila, Wednesday morning.

SPO2 Ardie Adalenilan, who was assigned at the Manila Police District's Traffic Enforcement Unit (MPD-TEU) and a resident of Lico corner Cavite Streets in Sta. Cruz, Manila, suffered severe head and body injuries.

He was later declared dead on arrival at the Philippine General Hospital.

Police said the victim had just left the MPD-TEU headquarters to attend a meeting at the National Capital Region Police Office headquarters in Camp Crame, Taguig City when the accident took place at around 11 a.m.

The driver of the truck, Immanuel David, 44, a native of Ilocos Sur, was arrested. Also arrested, Senior Insp. Hubert Carlos Baldivia, MPD-TEU chief, told the Inquirer.

Investigation showed that the driver was unaware of his van's recycle and had just passed by San Marcelino Street corner United Nations Avenue when he was struck by the speeding truck.

David was arrested after Joselito Atienza, a taxi driver who witnessed the accident, reported it to a traffic enforcer.

Attorney and the traffic enforcer then gave chase, finally catching up with the truck driver on Gumtika Highway.

The police said they would file a charge of reckless imprudence resulting in homicide against David.

Suspicious side trips

ON TARGET
Ramon Tulfo

WHAT WAS THE PURPOSE of President Arroyo's recent side trip to Colombia, a Latin American country known for its notorious drug cartels?

And why did the country suddenly set up diplomatic ties with a tiny island nation in the Caribbean called Barbados?

And why did La Gloria also make another side trip to Barcelona, the home base of Smartmatic, the foreign supplier of the Comelec's poll automation project?

What economic benefits could be gained from GMA's side trip to Colombia and the sudden diplomatic ties with Barbados?

These questions top answers from Palace spin doctors who have defended the numerous presidential trips abroad.

+++

Opposition leader and Makati Mayor Jejomar Binay is very suspicious of the Barbados trip, comparing it to Gloria's sudden side trip to Boracay, Aklan, in 2007.

In Boracay, the President witnessed the signing of the contract with ZTE Corp., which would have connected all government offices with a broadband network.

The ZTE contract was scrapped after the President's husband, Mike, and former Comelec Chair Ben Abalos were alleged to have been bribed by the Chinese firm.

So, what's wrong if the President watched the signing of a contract with Smartmatic officials?

No, what's wrong if our President met with drug lords in Colombia since she could have asked them for tips on how to catch their counterparts in the Philippines?

+++

Who said the Supreme Court is not an Old Boys' Club?

A recently retired justice of the high court reportedly contacted his pal Sec. Ralph Recto to help him locate colleagues.

More than six months be-

fore leaving [illegible], he reportedly canvassed fellow justices to serve a temporary leave/acting as PTRCI) employee for the second period of Art Reyes, 2nd congressional district candidate in Taguig City in the 2007 elections.

And while the TRO was finally lifted on June 16, there was talk that the high court would take back the lifting because the retiring justices were said to prevent a recount.

When the account was snapped by the high court, Reyes was last catching up on the declared winner.

If the retired justice would have his way, people's trust in the Supreme Court would be eroded further.

+++

Normal Sports Club, an athletic association in Paranaque City, donated Php [illegible] hospitality when it built a bridge over an area [illegible] residents say has blocked the flow of water under it.

The club is headed by Jonathon Thong, a British national.

During a heavy downpour, the access road that is now [illegible] to the bridge is flooded.

The bridge serves as the entry and egress of club members.

Normal is the same club which this space denounced some months ago for reportedly [illegible] [illegible] water flow.

The immigration commissioner should look into the activities of Thong, who owns L.A. Café on #6 M. del Pilar Street, Ermita, Manila.

The plane has reportedly been avoided by the police illegally for some illegal activities.

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The Fantasticks

Metro gets 968 new cops

A TOTAL OF 968 police recruits were assigned yesterday to Metro Manila with Chief Supt. Roberto Rosales, National Capital Region Police Office (NCRPO) director, administering the oath of office to them in Camp Bagong Diwa in Taguig City.

They were given the temporary rank of police officer 1.

Rosales said the new recruits would undergo six-month Public Safety Basic Recruit Course followed by another six months of field training.

Should they pass all the requirements, they will join the Philippine National Police at the end of their probationary training.

The police trainees, composed of 828 men and 140 women, are among the 1,000 new policemen being eyed for recruitment by the NCRPO.

Rosales said the records of the [illegible] personally monitor their progress "to make sure that they have the right attitude toward service, proper skills mastered in their work, and relevant knowledge of the law." Alena Guillerviler Gallejo

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EXPERIENCE THE DIFFERENCE

US cracks down on Iran firm

WASHINGTON—THE UNITED States on Tuesday imposed financial sanctions on a company in Iran that is accused of involvement in North Korea's missile proliferation network.

The Treasury Department named separate Hong Kong firms, one a company located in Kish Island, Iran. The action means that any bank accounts or other financial assets held in the US belonging to the company must be frozen. Americans also are prohibited from doing business with the firms.

It is the latest move by the US to keep pressure on Pyongyang, whose nuclear ambitions have anchored up global tensions.

The designation came as US envoy Philip Goldberg, who is in charge of coordinating implementation of sanctions against the North, left for talks on Thursday and Friday in China on ways to deal with the North. He was accompanied by senior officials from the Treasury and Defense departments and the White House.

A new United Nations resolution in the wake of a North Korean nuclear test in May seeks to stop the North's trading of banned weapons by requiring UN member states to inspect inspections of ships suspected of carrying prohibited cargo.

China's cooperation in implementing sanctions against its neighbor is seen as crucial to increasing pressure meant to push the North back to nuclear disarmament talks. AP

Car bomb kills 33 as US troops leave Iraq

BAGHDAD—IRAQI FORCES were in control of towns and cities nationwide on Wednesday after the pullout of United States troops six years after the invasion, but a bloody car bombing underscored the tough challenge ahead.

US President Barack Obama, who opposed the 2003 war ordered by his predecessor George W. Bush, hailed the US withdrawal as an "important milestone" but warned of difficult days of bloodshed and violence ahead.

The benchmark day was marked by a bomb attack on a popular market in Sadr City, an old Shiite district of Baghdad, which has long been riven by ethnic tensions, which left 33 people dead and 92 wounded including women and children.

"The explosion occurred at a very busy time. I only saw fire and my stall was thrown over. I saw students on fire in their shops and there were dead and wounded people on the ground," said Aziz Omar Shaltout, a 28-year-old vegetable stall holder.

Iraq marked the American pullback with a national holiday dot points after the invasion was toppled Saddam Hussein but sparked an insurgency and sectarian bloodshed that left tens of thousands dead.

American troops were to have quit built-up areas by midnight, ahead of a complete pullout ordered by Obama by the end of 2011.

Iraqi Prime Minister Nuri al-Maliki took an victim of Iraq's treaty and politics, saying they were up to the task of taking over from the Americans.

"It is an offshoot to the Iraqis. The people who said that the foreign troops would never withdraw and would keep permanent bases in our country are giving a great light to the successes to US soldiers," he said.

The US military said four soldiers died from combat-related injuries on Monday, taking to 4,321 the number of American troops killed since the invasion.

"Make no mistake, there will be difficult days ahead. We know that the violence in Iraq will continue; we see that already in the senseless bombing in Sadr City today," Obama said in the White House.

"This is an important step forward, as a sovereign and united Iraq continues to take control of its own destiny," he said, adding that Iraqi leaders now had to make "hard choices" to resolve political issues and bolster security.

"Today's transition is further proof that those who have tried to pull Iraq into the abyss of division and civil war are on the wrong side of history," Obama has asked Vice President Joe Biden to oversee the US departure from Iraq and Washington's effort to promote internal political reconciliation.

Shiite had warned earlier this month that insurgent groups and militias were likely to step up attacks in the run-up to June 30 in a bid to undermine confidence in Iraq's government forces, despite an overall lull in violence. AFP

DEMOCRACY MARCH: Tens of thousands of people took to the sweltering streets of Hong Kong on Wednesday for the annual pro-democracy march, on the day marked the 11th anniversary of its handover to China. AFP

Al-Qaida threatens France over burqa

SANA'A—AL-QAEDA'S NORTH African wing threatened revenge against France for banning a "war" against Muslim women who wear full burqas that cover them from head to toe, according to a Web statement posted in the group's name.

French legislators expressed concern this month that more and more Muslim women were wearing a burqa on a couple which chokes the entire body, leaving only a narrow gap for the eyes.

President Nicolas Sarkozy said the garments were not welcome in France because they are a symbol of the subjugation of women.

"Here in France measuring all her capacity, mobilizing all her resources and organizing her ranks to wage a perfidious new war against our sisters who wear the niqab," said the statement posted on a website used by al-Qaida supporters.

It said the French were committing these injustices "at a time when their dreadful satanic ... flock to our land and occupy our beaches and ravines, outrageously defying the feelings of Muslims." It said France's campaign against the burqa was tantamount to "religious extremism" and warned the movement is a hatred that would only grow.

"This is why we call upon all Muslims to respond to this hatred by another that is more enraging, we call upon them to confront this French obstinacy," the statement said. Reuters

Paintings saved Khmer Rouge survivor

PHNOM PENH—A SURVIVOR OF the Khmer Rouge's murderous rule on Wednesday that his ability to paint larger-than-life images of the regime's later leaders, Pol Pot, and portraits of other communist icons helped save his life.

Bou Meng was put to work painting portraits that glorified Mao Zedong of China and North Korea's Kim Il-sung, and another that marked Ho Chi Minh, the father of Vietnam's communist revolution.

"I was ordered to paint a portrait of Ho Chi Minh's head on the body of a dog," 66-year-old Bou Meng, told a United Nations-backed tribunal. Cambodia's archenemy was neighboring Vietnam, which eventually invaded to oust the Khmer Rouge's in 1979.

BOU MENG

Bou Meng was the third-and final survivor of the 8-23 prisons in nearby the UN-backed trial of Kaing Guek Eav—better known as Duch—who headed the Khmer Rouge's notorious facility in Phnom Penh between 1975-1979. An estimated 1.7 million Cambodians died from forced labor, starvation, medical neglect and executions under the regime.

Duch is accused of overseeing the torture of some 15,000 prisoners before they were executed. Seven people are believed to have walked out of S-21 alive, only three of whom are alive today.

Bou Meng, like the other survivors, said tortures beat him unfortunately to force a confession that he was a CIA spy.

"I didn't even know what the CIA was," he said. "I kept repeating my answer and they kept beating me."

The hearings stopped when his jailers found out he had a skill that could serve them. AP

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July 14-15, 2008 — 3rd Market-Driving Strategies (CEB50) by Joseph Go
July 21-22, 2008 — 6th Delivering Outstanding Service by Chrys Esmael Go
July 21-22, 2008 — 5th Consumer Insighting by Dr. Ned Roberto
July 23-24, 2008 — 1st Persuasive Communications by Malu Dy Buncio
July 28, 2008 — 6th Word-of-Mouth (WOM) Marketing by Dr. Ned Roberto
July 29 - Aug 1, 2008 — 12th Managing a Successful Distributor Operation (CEB50) by Emilio Macasaet III

Aug 4, 2008 — 5th Young Market Masters Summit
Aug 6-7, 2008 — 4th Market-Driving Strategies by Joseph Go
Aug 6-7, 2008 — 31st Power Selling in Managing by Rowen Umbrero
Aug 6-7, 2008 — 9th The Discipline of Plant Self Management by Emilio Macasaet III
Aug 11-12, 2008 — 1st Business Development Bootcamp by Malu Dy Buncio
Aug 11-12, 2008 — 4th Measuring and Managing Brand Equity by Dr. Ned Roberto
Aug 12 & 16, 2008 — 1st Advertising That Sells in Good Times and Bad by Greg Banzon
Aug 13-14, 2008 — 6th How to Set Up a Distribution Network by Emilio Macasaet III
Aug 13-14, 2008 — 20th Dr. Ned Roberto's Effective Negotiating and Influencing Skills
Aug 18-19, 2008 — 10th Dr. Ned Roberto's Applied Marketing Research
Aug 21-22, 2008 — 2nd Powerlighting for New Market Space by Dr. Ned Roberto

Watch out for the 5th Young Market Masters Summit featuring the 6 Young Market Masters Awardees on August 4, 2008, 1:30pm-5:30pm, at the Mandarin Oriental Hotel, Makati City.

Reserve and confirm your place early and ENJOY SPECIAL DISCOUNTS for early bird savings and group registration. Please call TJ, Flit, Melody or Joy at (02) 584-0000 / 584-0000 / 722-2018 / 412-0934, text 0919-81-168-88, email us at info@marsenth.net, or visit us at www.marsenth.net. We are located at 14 Bang-kang St., ISF Makers Center, New Manila, Quezon City 1112.

MACMILLAN MARKETS AND FOLIOS, INC.

Elderly, children urged to skip hajj over swine flu

RIYADH—CHILDREN, PREGNANT WOMEN, the elderly and those with chronic illnesses should stay away from the annual hajj pilgrimage in Saudi Arabia to prevent catching swine flu, health experts recommended on Tuesday.

The recommendations come as some 10 million Muslims have raised questions about the risk posed by swine flu to the millions attending the annual Muslim pilgrimage, which takes place this year in December, with some even suggesting quarantining people returning from Saudi Arabia.

The Saudi kingdom invited experts from the United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the World Health Organization, and others on a four-day meeting in the western seaport city of Jeddah to examine Saudi measures to prevent the spread of swine flu during the Muslim pilgrimage.

In a statement at the conclusion of the conference, Health Minister Abdullah al-Rabeeah said the kingdom invited the expert's because "of concerns about the ongoing pandemic and the potential for mass infection of viruses in the crowded setting of the hajj."

The pilgrimage is required of all able-bodied Muslims at least once in their lifetime. It attracts almost three million people every year to the holy cities of Mecca and Medina. The objective of the hajj is a brief period during which people gather to and around Mecca to perform a series of rituals.

Hundreds of thousands more Muslims also perform Umra, the voluntary lesser pilgrimage that can be completed at any other time of the year.

The meeting came a few weeks after Egyptian Sheikh Mahdi Hamza al-Gabali voiced concerns about the possible spread of swine flu, and said the area of thousands of Egyptians who perform the hajj risk being quarantined upon their return. AP

Republic of the Philippines
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
Regional Field Office No. 3
San Agustin Pil, Cam. Sur

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

(Supply & Delivery of 140,000 pieces Coffee Seedlings under Coconut Farm Development and Productivity Program)

The Department of Agriculture Regional Field Office No. 5 (DA-RFO 5), San Agustin Pili, Camarines Sur is implementing Coconut Farm Development and Productivity Program in the 1st District of the Province of Albay, Pursuant thereto, the agency is in need of 140,000 pieces of Coffee Seedlings for delivery to various identified farms in the 1st District of the Province of Albay as follows:

LGCNs: Municipalities of Malilipot, Tiwi and Tabaco City, Albay	- 70,000 Pieces
Lot Two: Municipalities of Bacacay, Malilipot & Rio Tuvera, Albay	- 70,000 Pieces

The agency intends to apply the amount of Eight Million Three Hundred Twenty Three Thousand Philippine Pesos (PHP 8,323,000.00) on the total Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC).

Private Contractors shall be held on July 11, 2008 at 1:00 in the afternoon, Conference Room, Administration Building, this agency in the presence of prospective bidders and shall open with choice to submit. Prospective bidders are strongly enjoined to attend. Bidding documents containing details on the project may be inspected and could be made available at, and may be obtained from, BAC Secretariat, Legal Office, this agency by prospective bidders right after the Pre-Bid Conference until the time of office hours of July 25, 2008, upon submission of Letter of Intent indicating their Lot or Lots to be participated in, and payment of non-refundable amount of PHP500.00 as Annual Eligibility Accreditation fee and PHP1,000 the applicable fee as mentioned in the Contract Office.

Deadline for submission of bids in three envelopes will be on 25 July 2008 before 10:00 in the morning. Opening of bids will follow on the same day, at 11:00 in the morning, Conference Room, Administration Building, this agency in the presence of observers and bidders who choose to attend. Late bids submitted shall not be accepted. Bidders whose bids will be automatically rejected on the ground of non-compliance with the prescribed bid requirements.

Each bid must be accompanied by bidder's bond equivalent to one of the following, issued in the Philippines: Bidder's Bond, Cashier's/Manager's Check, Bank Draft/Guarantee or Irrevocable Letter of Credit; 10% (Bank Guarantee) | 2.0% (with Surety Bond).

The bid reserves the right to reject any and all bids, declare a failure of bidding, or not award the contract on the grounds of lowest bids evidence of collusion between the BAC and any of the bidders, or if the collusion is between a bidder and a third party including any and which statements, suppresses or notifies all bids in order, suppress or notify competition (b) the BAC is found to have failed in following the prescribed bidding procedures, or (c) for any justifiable and reasonable ground where the award of the contract will not redound to the benefit of the government as follows: (1) the physical and economic conditions have significantly changed due to events the project no longer economically, (2) if the project is no longer necessary as determined by the head of the procuring entity, (3) if the project is no longer necessary as determined by the head of the procuring entity, (4) if the source of funds for the project has been withheld or reduced through no fault of the procuring entity.

Further, the CAPITA assumes no obligation whatsoever to compensate or indemnify the bidder any expenses or loss that may occur in participating in this advertising.

For more details call or visit the BAC Secretariat, Legal Office (Tel. No. 477-0958) Ext 500, E. San Agustin, Pili, Camarines Sur during office hours or visit www.philgeps.gov.ph, DTI, or this website.

30 June 2008, Pili, Camarines Sur

(Sgd.) JOSE P. BATAC, DVM, CESO IV
Regional Executive Director

ABENSON

The WORLD

Editor Lorenzo B. Dumo

Jackson's will puts assets in trust fund

LOS ANGELES—THE FIRST HINTS ABOUT Michael Jackson's final wishes surfaced in a will he signed nearly seven years ago to the day and although details won't be available until the document is filed in a court, there's nothing to indicate that its instructions are at odds with the hasty arrangements made by the singer's mother and father.

The will gives guardianship over his children to the singer's mother and leaves all his assets in a trust fund, a person with knowledge of the document told The Associated Press on Tuesday.

The will was signed on July 7, 2002, and named an executor Jackson's longtime lawyer John Branca and John McClain, a music executive and a family friend, said the person, who spoke on condition of anonymity because he was not authorized to speak on the topic.

The will surfaced just a day after the family said in court documents it believed the 50-year-old entertainer had died without a valid will and moved to take control over his estate. Inc. debt-ridden beloved estate.

In response, Judge Mitchell Beckloff granted Jackson's 79-year-old mother Katherine Jackson temporary guardianship of her son's three children, who range in age from 7 to 12.

The judge also gave her control over some of her son's personal property that is now in the hands of an unnamed third party. But the judge did not immediately rule on her requests to take charge of the children's and Jackson's estates.

The move by Jackson's family to proactively take legal actions does not seem to conflict with the singer's stated desire to have his children put under his parents' care and their financial welfare assured.

Papers said the personal bankruptcy of Jackson's parents in 1999 could work against Katherine taking control of the estate. AP

PHOENIX Shala, of Germany writes a message on a poster of Michael Jackson as a makeshift memorial in Los Angeles on Tuesday. AP

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Crash survivor barely knows how to swim

MORONI—A TEENAGE GIRL WHO IS THE only known survivor of a Yemenia Airways crash could barely swim but managed to hang on long enough for rescuers to find her in the waters, her father told French radio on Wednesday.

A source who treated the girl said she was "doing well" in a hospital in the Comoros.

A Yemenia Airbus A310 jet carrying 153 people crashed into the Indian Ocean early Tuesday as it attempted to land in the dark amid howling winds. A French government minister said on Wednesday the plane's black boxes—flight data and cockpit voice recorders—appear to have been found.

Kouton Bakari said he spoke with his eldest daughter, 14-year-old Shaya, by phone after Tuesday's crash. Shaya had left Paris on Monday night with her mother to see family in the Comoros.

"(Shaya was) injured, she forced herself inside the plane," her father said, describing her as "fragile" and saying she could "barely swim."

"She's a very timid girl. I never thought she would escape like that," Bakari told France's RTL radio.

Said Mohamed, a nurse at El Maarouf hospital in the Comoros capital of Moroni, said the girl was doing well and doctors would release more on her condition later Wednesday.

Sgt. Said Abdul told Europe 1 radio that he rescued the girl after she was found bobbing in the water. She wouldn't grasp the life ring rescuers threw to her, so he jumped into the sea, Abdul said. He said rescuers gave the trembling girl warm water with sugar. AP

Want a baby? Have sex every day!

PARIS—MEN SEEKING TO BECOME a dad should have sex each day, or ejaculate daily, for a week before their partner ovulates in order to maximize sperm quality, according to a study presented on Tuesday.

Australian fertility specialist David Greening recruited 130 men whose sperm had a higher than normalized of DNA damage.

Before the test, on average 39 percent of the group's sperm was found to be damaged, meaning that it was classified as "poor" in quality. Among individuals, this ranged from 13 percent to 98 percent.

The men were asked to ejaculate daily for seven days, but were not given any drugs or told to make any changes in lifestyle.

After seven days, their sperm was examined again.

The average of damaged sperm fell to 16 percent, placing it in the category of "fair" in quality.

Fourth-fifths of the men saw an increase in sperm quality, and many of them moved into the "good" range and out of the "poor" or "fair" categories.

However, one-fifth saw a decline in sperm quality.

Greening, an obstetrician and endocrinologist at Sydney IVF, an Australian company that carries out assisted reproduction, said the improvements were "substantial and statistically highly significant." Daily ejaculation not only boosted sperm quality for most of the men, it also helped sperm motility...another big factor in successful fertilization—even though volunteers of semen declined, he said.

The research did not investigate whether the improvement in sperm quality led to better pregnancy rates. AFP

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Editor Raul D. Marcelo • Assistant Editor Carrie S. Nartatez

BUSINESS

San Miguel eyes stake in SCTEx project

Infrastructure backbone for Central Luzon development

By Doris C. Dumlao

DIVERSIFYING FOOD and beverage conglomerate San Miguel Corp. wants a piece of the P27-billion Subic-Clark-Tarlac Expressway (SCTEx), the country's first toll road operated by the private sector.

SCTEx runs the state-owned Bases Conversion Development Authority (BCDA) for three decades, according to the agency's website.

SMC chairman emeritus Eduardo M. Cojuangco Jr. confirmed the company's interest in the project in a letter to Transportation Secretary Leandro R. Mendoza dated June 29.

"In a disclosure to the Philippine Stock Exchange yesterday, San Miguel spokesperson Atty. Ferdinand Constantino said the conglomerate has expressed interest in acquiring a stake in the SCTEx from the state-owned Bases Conversion Development Authority. He other details were given.

SCTEx, the BCDA's biggest and most ambitious project to date, is a major infrastructure envisioned to serve as a backbone of development in the Central Luzon region.

The 93.77-kilometer, four-lane highway is divided into two major sections. The Subic-Clark section (Package 1) is 50.3 kilometers long while the Clark-Tarlac section (Package 2) spans 43.27 kilometers.

San Miguel earlier obtained a foothold in the country's biggest power retailer Manila Electric Co. and largest oil refiner Petron Corp. It has also obtained majority control of multi-billion-dollar Bank of Commerce. It is also investing in domestic Liberty Telecom Holdings Inc., which it plans to use as its vehicle for its foray into the highly-competitive telecommunications business.

The conglomerate is scouting for opportunities in heavy industries and infrastructure as part of its diversification.

It is eyeing part of the funds for its diversification through the sale of its international beer operations and the initial public

SAN MIGUEL /B2

$450-M power plant to rise in Sarangani

By Amy R. Remo

THE ALCANTARA GROUP'S POWER SUBsidiary, Conal Holdings Corp., yesterday said it would proceed with the construction of a $450-million, coal-fired power plant in Maasim, Sarangani Province.

The 200-megawatt project would be implemented in two phases, according to Conal project manager Engracio S. Gonzales.

"Phase I will include the construction of the first 100-megawatt plant and the common facilities for the whole power station complex. Phase II, representing the second 100-megawatt capacity, will be started within 16 to 24 months after the commencement of construction of Phase I," Gonzales added.

He said the power plant was expected to go on stream commercially by late 2012, at the earliest.

GHC's coal facility is expected to help ease the power supply shortfall in Mindanao, which is expected to reach 174 MW by 2011.

In October last year, Energy Secretary Angelo T. Reyes warned that this year, electricity demand would "outstrip supply in Mindanao."

According to the Department of Energy, 2009 would already be critical for the Mindanao grid with peak demand reaching 1,323 MW, excluding the additional requirements for the Aluminum Smelting Complex of Sumitomo Corp. in Maco, Davao del Norte.

DOE-PA /C

Stocks close lower

SHARE PRICES CLOSE 0.21 PERCENT lower yesterday as the market consolidated on profit-taking moves ahead of the July 3 holiday, dealers said.

The composite index fell 5.13 points to 2,492.88 while the all-shares index closed 0.04 percent or 1.567.17 points.

There were 80 gainers against 63 losers and 44 that were unchanged.

A total of 1.68 billion shares worth P1.62 billion changed hands.

The local currency traded at 48.303 to the dollar in morning trade yesterday.

"We still have to consolidate some more," said Sonsee Tan of Regina Capital Development Corp., attributing the downturn to technical reasons.

"Basically, the market is just reacting to [foreign] fund selling a little on the downside," he told AFP. "The US market is also closed so I don't think any reason for our market to go up."

Top-traded Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co. was unchanged at P2,200. Alliance Global Group Inc. dropped 1.63 percent to P2.84 while Energy Development Corp. slipped 1.28 percent to P1.90. Manila Electric Co. (Meralco) gained 2.88 percent to P440.

AFP

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₱3,299	Manila to Jakarta or Kuala Lumpur; Cebu to Hong Kong; Clark to Bangkok
₱4,299	Cebu to Singapore

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CEBU PACIFIC AIR.COM

Max's seen opening more outlets overseas

Company to open in Canada, Middle East

By Abigail L. Ho

LOCAL FOOD CHAIN MAX'S RESTAURANT is looking at pioneering the Canadian and Middle Eastern markets, even while still preparing to open new branches in the United States — one in New Jersey and the other in Hawaii — within the year.

In an interview with reporters, Max's president Robert Teng said the company would increase the number of its outlets in the United States from six to eight before the end of this year.

"There is actually the best time to buy property or go into leases in the United States because rates are very low," he said at the sidelines of the Philippine International Franchise Conference and Expo 2009 opening yesterday.

"The opening of our two new branches in the US was actually supposed to take place last year. This was delayed not because of the crisis, but because we had some difficulty finding good locations for the stores," he said.

Of Max's six existing outlets in the United States, he said only two were company-owned, while the other four were franchises.

The two aims to be opened this year would likewise be franchised outlets, he said.

He told Max's was looking at Canada and the Middle East as possible new locations for business.

"The Canada branch will probably open by next year, but the ones in the Middle East doesn't have a timeframe yet since we're still in the early stages of talks. Both of those will also be franchises," he said.

Max's first opened its doors to franchisees in the second quarter of 1998.

In the Philippines, Max's has 119 branches, 55-of-which were franchises.

The restaurant chain would also be opening new branches in the country this year, he said, in keeping with the company's target to put up three to six outlets a year.

Max's recently opened its 300 Mega branch and would open another in Calapan, Mindoro toward the end of the year.

Despite the crisis, he said Max's continued to register growth in sales, as Filipinos crave the restaurant chain's signature fried chicken and other homegrown fares.

"In fact, we're up by 6 percent in the local market. People are still spending for food," he said.

Petroenergy sells interest in Galoc

BPI Family cited for SME programs

BPI FAMILY SAVINGS BANK BAGGED A special citation for helping to perk up the country's franchising sector with its array of banking solutions for small and medium enterprises (SME).

BPI Family, the thrift bank unit of the Ayala-led Bank of the Philippine Islands, received a citation for "Franchise-Friendly Bank" at the recently held 10th Franchise Excellence Awards (FEA).

"It is the first time that a bank has received such a citation, which is given to institutions and individuals who have made significant contributions to support the franchising sector.

BPI Family was cited because of its "Grow Your SME Business Solutions" and "SME Trainer and SME Development Program."

FEA is organized by the Philippine Franchise Association in partnership with the Department of Trade and Industry, along with the cooperation of Philippine Retailers Association and the Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

"We gratefully receive the FEA Special Citation as this gives appreciation to BPIFB's philosophy of building up small and medium enterprises through our partnership-banking products and services," BPI Family president Alfonso Salcedo Jr. said in a statement.

Doris C. Dumlao

By Amy R. Borja

LISTED FIRM PETROENERGY Resources Corp. has sold its 1.333-percent participating interest in Service Contract 14C to the Galoc oil field in offshore Palawan, for $800,000 per percentage interest point.

In a disclosure to the Philippine Stock Exchange, Petroenergy's legal head of corporate and legal affairs Arlan D Pradera said the sale took effect on June 30.

Petroenergy said it signed the deed of sale, prepared by field operator Galoc Production Co. WLL (GPC), yesterday and was the same to GPC.

"We have, therefore, begun the process of transferring the participating interest to the consortium, the said sale being considered by Petroenergy as consummated," Pradera said.

"The decision to proceed with the sale was made because management believes that the minimal participating interest in the Galoc oil field will not contribute significantly to the revenue, considering the risks involved," Pradera explained.

GPC holds a 56.2-percent interest in SC 14C, while Nido Petroleum Philippines Pty. Ltd. has a 22.26-percent stake. Oriental Petroleum and Minerals Corp./Linapacan Oil Gas and Power Corp. (7.75 percent); Forum Energy Philippines Corp. (2.27 percent); and Alcorn Gold Resources Corp. (1.33 percent).

In a related development, EPC said there "continues to be a delay in the reconnection of the floating production storage and offloading (FPSO) facility, following the disconnection last week.

"The delay is due to maintenance and deterioration of the mooring and riser system that connects the FPSO to the seabed and subsea wells," GPC explained.

Last week, EPC decided to disconnect FPSO from the mooring and riser system due to adverse weather.

"An underwater survey was undertaken to establish the extent of the problem and as offshore construction vessel has been mobilized to the field to undertake repaired work. At this time the scope of the necessary repair and work is being established along with the likely duration," GPC added.

$450-M power ...

From page B1

is requirement of 1,050 MW.

Based on its own estimates, CIBC pegged the growth in power demand on the island at a conservative 3 percent annually, saying 2009 "with a peak demand level of 1,268 MW) is the base year."

"At this rate, the actual reserves in the Mindanao grid will likely fall by 60 MW in 2014 and 30 MW in 2015 before completely going into a deficit in 2016. When reserve capacity goes down to this level, any plant outage in the grid will lead to power outages," CIBC said.

"Thus, the completion of the second [phase] of the coal project in late 2014 will just be in time to stave off a regime of rolling brownouts due to a shortage in capacity in the Mindanao grid," the company added.

CIBC—a joint venture between the Aboitizes family's Aboitiz Equity Ventures Inc. and Thailand's Egco—will put up the power plant within the franchise area of Davao Light & Power Co. and Davao del Sur Electric Cooperative (Dasurec).

CIBC said it expected prices of electricity in South Cotabato to drop by as much as 50 centavos, a kilowatt-hour as soon as the facility goes on stream.

San Miguel eyes ...

From page B1

offering of its packaging business, San Miguel expects to raise up to $800 million from these twin moves.

San Miguel president Ramon Ang earlier said the complementary could generate up to $700 million from the sale of its previous beer business to subsidiary San Miguel Brewery Inc.

On the planned IPO of San Miguel packaging, Ang said the conglomerate had pledged to its Japanese partner, the Ventures group, to list the division on the Philippine Stock Exchange this year.

According to Ang, San Miguel may raise about $1.00 million from the sale of 10-14 percent of the packaging unit to the public.

He said Domestacks, which has a 35-percent stake in the packaging business, would keep its stake in the packaging business.

DISCLOSURES

UNIONBANK (PHILIPPINES) COMMERCIAL BANK CORP. said Rolando C. Ambrosio, vice president/compliance officer, resigned from the bank effective July 1. The bank has appointed Mary Elizabeth H. Baybay as its new compliance officer.

***

THE BOARD of **Centro Escolar University** declared on June 29 cash dividend equivalent to P0.25 per share to stockholders of record as of July 16, payable on Aug. 5.

***

METROPOLITAN Bank & Trust Co. accepted the resignation on June 29 of Yolanda E. Crisanto as head of corporate communications division effective July 22.

***

PACIFIC Online Systems Corp. on June 29 reported based the following from the market: 26,000 shares at P9.80 each and 11,000 shares at P10. The company's capital structure is as follows: 100,115,000 issued shares; 101,019,400 outstanding shares; 904,115,000 listed shares; and 8,196,400 treasury shares.

Its board also approved the declaration of two tranches of cash dividends—P0.25 per share to stockholders of record as of July 24, payable on Aug. 17 and P0.25 per share to stockholders of record as of Nov. 20, payable on Dec. 14.

***

ASSETS (PHIL.) Hotel Corp. will host its annual stockholders' meeting on July 29 at 4 p.m. at the Manila Pavilion Hotel in Manila. Stockholders of record as of June 23 will be entitled to notice of and vote at the meeting.

***

THE BOARD of **Manila Electric Co.** approved the payment of cash dividend at the rate of 15 percent of par value per amount of the company's 39 percent outstanding preferred shares "B" on July 24 to shareholders of record as of June 30.

***

THE BOARD of **Rizal Commercial Banking Corp.** has accepted the resignation of Christopher I. Teague as member of the board effective immediately.

***

RCBC Commercial Banking Corp. on June 29 elected the following as members board: Regular Directors: Alvaro T. Fuchengco, Helen Y. Dee, Lorenzo V. Tan, Rizalina G. Mantaring, Cesar E. A. Virata, Teodoro D. Regala, Wilfredo E. Sanchez, Reynaldo G. Vea, Ma. Celia H. Fernandez-Estevello and Yvonne S. Yuchengco; independent directors—Teodoro D. Peña, Armando M. Medina, Francisco C. Sumaoang Jr., Roberto F. de Ocampo and Antonio L. Meñez Jr.

***

ZEUS Holdings Inc. on June 30 announced that Elisa A. Zalsos has resigned as independent director of the company. The board has elected Oliver S. Faustino to serve as independent director for the remainder of the year.

***

PRYCE Corp. on June 30 elected the following to the board of directors: Salvador P. Escaño, Ramon R. Del Rosario Jr., Bienvenido S. Ecraquel, Ulrich A. Palma, Vicente O. Mabilo Jr., Roland Jesus R. de Leon and Simeon S. Dimaisip.

***

EPLASA Corp. said Emmanuel M. Monsod re-appointed the position of president as provided for management according to the by-laws on July 1. *Compiled by Gino Antonio Aquino Viscarra*

PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE

As of July 1, 2009

DISCLOSURES

July 1, 2009 Dividends	Issue	Cum-Dividend	Dollar-Equivalent	Peso Equivalent
United States	Dollar	1.71714	1.00000	48.100
Japan	Yen	0.01804	0.01050	0.505
United Kingdom	Pound	2.71188	1.58000	76.038
Hong Kong	Dollar	0.22014	0.12826	6.171
Switzerland	Franc	1.60714	0.93625	45.037
Canada	Dollar	1.52305	0.88750	42.701
Singapore	Dollar	1.19521	0.69625	33.501
Australia	Dollar	1.17454	0.68421	32.922
Bahrain	Dinar	4.55008	2.65125	127.566
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.45667	0.26607	12.801
Brunei	Dollar	1.20008	0.69929	33.647
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.00017	0.00009	0.005
Kuwait	Dinar	5.94008	3.46125	166.547
Malaysia	Ringgit	0.49008	0.28554	13.741
UAE	Dirham	0.46674	0.27196	13.085
EU	Euro	1.69008	0.98482	47.394
Korea	Won	0.00138	0.00080	0.039
China	Yuan	0.25138	0.14648	7.049
Thailand	Baht	0.05138	0.02994	1.441
India	Rupee	0.03564	0.02077	0.999
Philippine	Peso	0.02400	0.01398	0.673
New Zealand	Dollar	0.94008	0.54792	26.367
Vietnam	Dong	0.00009	0.00005	0.003
Taiwan	NT Dollar	0.03564	0.02077	0.999

Ship lifting

SOMEBODY IN THIS ADMINISTRATION must be protecting Sulpicio Lines, owner of MV Princess of the Stars, which created a big stir on media when it capsized last year.

Up to now, more than a year after the tragedy, nobody could as yet say how many really died. Estimates varied from 700 to 800 people. Even Sulpicio Lines apparently did not keep records of the vessel's passengers.

What is sure, Sulpicio Lines is still very much around, still plying it is through its cargo-shipping business and, most of all, still trying to renew its permit for passenger vessels.

From what I gathered, the Board of Marine Inquiry that investigated Sulpicio Lines, recommended the cancellation of its shipping franchise. Hey, it's not as if the company only did a little shoplifting or something.

The board has in fact already submitted its findings and recommendations to the Department of Transportation and Communications.

But then somebody in this ever solicitous nation has been stopping the Maritime Industry Authority from moving on the "recommendation" in Sulpicio Lines.

Adds Sen Franklin Drilon, unsettling to our concern to the shipping industry, the board recommended the prosecution of Sulpicio Lines owners and executives—in a criminal case.

How come Sulpicio Lines is still getting away with it all? Well, it seems the Marina cannot act on the board's recommendation because it has yet to receive an "official" copy of the report.

Funny, I had certain Marina board members only have "unofficial" copies, from sources other than the DOTC.

You see, the board submitted its report straight to the DOTC, which apparently thought it best to keep the report a top secret.

And here is the clincher, Drilon and gentlemen, whenever Sulpicio Lines applies for a permit to run passenger vessels again, its executives get the privilege of presenting their case to the Marina board. In person, GK!

It is such a special arrangement that no other shipping firm can ever get in this country made famous the world over by two record-breaking maritime tragedies (remember Doña Paz) courtesy of two shipping firms. Yes, it's not very own Sulpicio Lines! Hmmm!

* * *

THE COUNTRY'S first domestic cruise ship, the MS 7,107 Islands Cruise, is now gathering dust at the pier.

BREAKTIME

Conrado B. Bawad III

The government recently seized the vessel, allegedly for the owner's failure to pay customs duties and taxes.

Ironically, the Lolo at the Palace has written a personal letter to the ship-owner, Jose Juan Tajanlangit Jr., pushing him for his effort to promote tourism in the country.

Reads the President's letter: "I truly value your support in assisting our build a strong and fast growing economy... This is also our motivation for getting up every day to work hard and focus like a laser beam in strengthening the economy."

Now, who would dare sabotage the Lolo's economic program? Well, it seems that only the Department of Finance could, courtesy of Undersecretary Rachel Ilarde, the same person who became famous for stating "Science is not education," apparently because she never took up Jose Rizal's "Noli Me Tangere" or Balagtas' "Florante at Laura" in school.

The Bureau of Customs earlier cleared the cruise ship of tax liabilities, since the business was registered with the Peza and BMA, which give tax incentives to pioneering ventures.

Lo and behold, the one and only Sales tossed BOC and ordered "forfeiture" of the country's one and only cruise ship.

Word goes around that somebody is behind this scheme against Tajanlangit, going by the name of Juan Onrin, a former congressman, who supposedly owns a container servicing firm called Orophil. ("Onlo" and "Orophil"—get it?)

Orophil filed a case against another company of Tajanlangit, claiming that it owed Orophil several millions of pesos. Tajanlangit in turn filed similar cases against Orophil.

It only is show you how things just fall into place in this country, let me say that when Tajanlangit was applying for license to operate the cruise ship, who should come to the rescue of Orophil if not...well, the Marina.

The country's shipping authority said it would only give Tajanlangit the go-ahead to buy the cruise ship, "without prejudice to the outcome of the case" filed by Orophil.

What has Orophil got to do with it all, and Marina believed like it was Orophil's collection agency!

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BUSINESS

Franchising firms see 10% growth

By Abigail L. Ho

THE LOCAL FRANCHISING INDUSTRY EXPECTS to grow by 5-10 percent this year, with many franchise brands poised to expand both here and abroad.

Robert Teves, president of the Philippine Franchise Association, said the organization's members were still registering growth amid the economic downturn.

"The franchise business has a 98-percent success rate, and all our members say they still have growth. The business is thriving, expanding," he said.

Teves extended Emil Japasson fast-food chain Tokyo Tokyo was set to open a branch in the United States via the same three months, while local dressed-French fries purveyor Potato Corner would soon be setting up shop in California.

"There's no slowdown in overseas expansion," he said.

Of all overseas markets, he said the United States was the easiest for local brands to break into because of language and culture barriers.

"There's no language barrier there. The franchise rules are pretty clear and straightforward, although the market is heavily regulated. There's also a huge number of Pinoys there, making it a good point of entry before going to the mainstream. It opens the door to other countries in Asia and other regions," he said yesterday in a briefing.

SBN chain executive Jennie Lim said the group aimed to make the Philippines the gateway to the Association of Southeast Asian Nations market by bringing more foreign brands here, and then taking homegrown brands to international markets.

"This year, we're bringing in some European franchises. The Europeans are now considering the Philippine market because their own market is lost and they have to look for new markets. They're looking at growth in Asia, which is faster as it percent than Europe's 2 percent," he said.

For those seeking to become their own boss, he said a franchise was one of the best businesses to get into, especially during recessionary times.

Camiguin gets P500-M boost

By Raoul W. Dominguez

THE NATIONAL ECONOMIC AND DEVELOPMENT Authority expects the start-but-of April next year of a P500-million project for a cable radio road, improved agriculture and tourism, and better flood control facilities in Camiguin Island with the crossing of a great from Japan.

According to Neda, the Japanese government, through the Japan Bank for International Cooperation, has extended a one-billion-yen grant or some P650 million for the flood disaster mitigation project in Camiguin.

The project, which involves the construction of dams and the reconstruction of the Hubangon Bridge, also intends to mitigate damage caused by disasters such as flood and debris flow.

The towns of al Mambajao, Mahinog, Catarman, Sagay and Guinsiliban are expected to benefit directly as the construction sites are located in these municipalities.

Neda said Tokyo has given the go-ahead for the Department of Public Works and Highways to implement the project within the Japanese government's fiscal year 2009 that ends March 31, 2010.

Neda director general Ralph G. Recto signed with Jica president Sadako Ogata as representative for the project last June 19 during President Macapagal-Arroyo's visit to Japan.

Rosalia de Leon, officer in charge of the Department of Finance's International Economic group, said that during the visit, Manila and Tokyo exchanged notes on the implementation of projects that would be funded by the JBIC.

These include a $410-million loan for the Landbank of the Philippines' agricultural credit support project for short, medium and long-term funding.

More loans for MSMEs urged

By Michelle V. Rosca

THE BANGKO SENTRAL NG PILIPINAS HAS urged banks to lend more to micro, small, and medium-sized enterprises, saying that meeting their credit needs would ease the impact of the global economic downturn.

BSP Deputy Governor Nora Gutierrez said that as much as 60 percent of the financing needs of MSMEs were unmet.

Gutierrez said that although there had been efforts to boost lending to the sector, more is needed to be done.

"We [BSP] would like to look at it as a challenge to the banks because estimates indicate that 40 percent of MSMEs' credit needs are still not served," Gutierrez said in a speech before MSME operators in Negros Oriental during the launching last month of a survey fund to empowerment in the province.

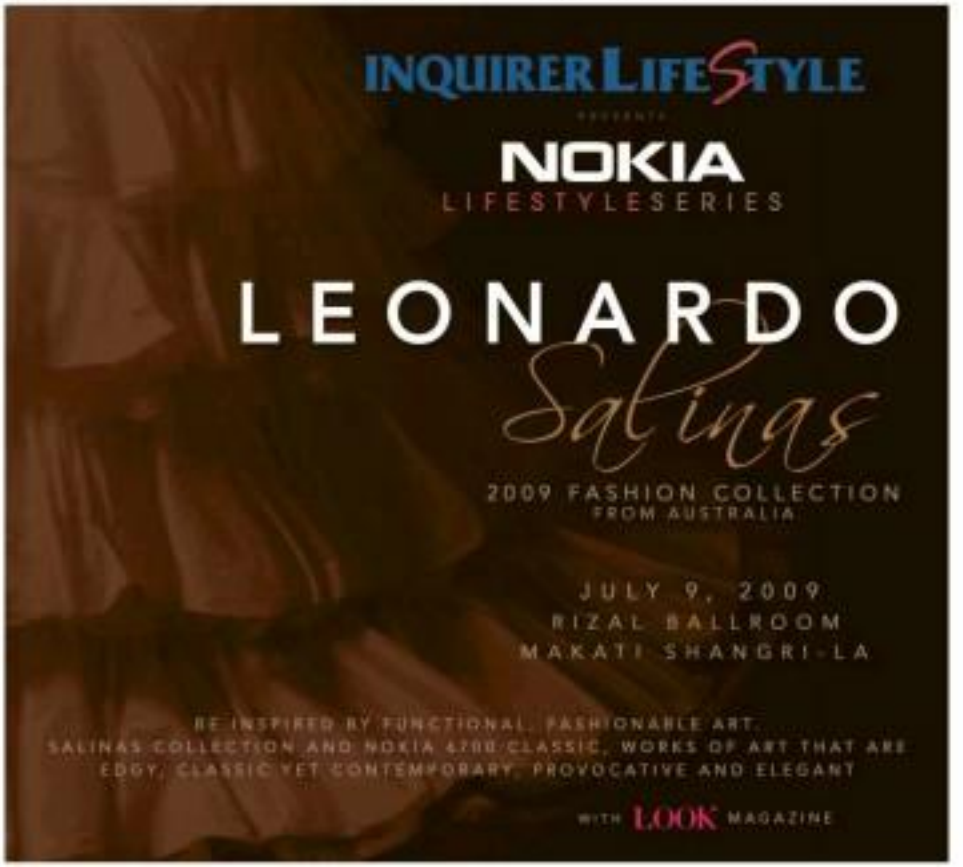
Surety fund is the guarantee used by MSMEs, especially those who do not have assets to put up as collateral, when applying for a bank loan.

MSMEs are estimated to account for 99 percent of local firms.

Gutierrez said the time was not right for banks to be cautious in their lending activities. Instead, they should be more eager to lend to MSMEs.

The BSP already has several programs aimed at helping MSMEs access funds, such as the establishment of the credit surety fund.

CSF is a trust fund composed of contributions from cooperatives and provincial governments to help MSMEs secure bank loans even if they don't have collateral.



Editor Thelma Sioson San Juan

LIFESTYLE Food

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'Dinuguan' with 'sampalok' leaves and other come-ons in Bulacan

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REP. LORNA SILVERIO, A restaurateur herself, is passionate about the kitchen, cooking and dining.

She tells us what and where she loves to eat when in Bulacan.

Here and her husband Ricardo Silverio's pigeon farm produces the best marinated pigeons, scrumptious

Inn Carding (as I call him) wandered for the pigeon master and brought him to Manila from China, thus the authentic taste and flavor.(He pigeon arrives, and it's a bird.

Lorna's guide:

"I do not usually go out to eat when in Bulacan as I am happy eating home-cooked food. But when I have unannounced guests, I usually bring them to La Fiorella Restaurant (tel. 044-7982037, 09175082740) along OBT Highway in Balubad. The restaurant is owned by Rosanna Abejo who has retired from modeling."

KITCHEN RESCUE

Maggie Aquino

'Okoy'

My favorite dishes at La Fiorella are:

Okoy is pumpkin or squash fritters with shrimps. It has a crunchy crust and yet is soft in the middle. It is slightly sweet and tangy and good with vinegar.

Dinuguan or in Ilocano eg sampalok is Ilocano-ka. Like your common dinuguan, it is cooked by stewing pork in pork blood but by using young tamarind leaves to give it a sour taste. Instead of using vinegar. Tamarind trees shed their old leaves only once a year. Dinuguan or sinkang is really a rare treat.

Diwal Inn's dare is also one of my favorites, with lugaw prepared from scratch. Shrimp available for lugaw is limited and sensitive. It is slightly sweet.

Edsor's La-gawan

Another eating out-inside place is Edsor's Lugawan (0908-8146426), run by husband and wife Edsor and Gina Igtiza. The place is simple; no tables, only benches, no frills but their LTR (lugaw, tokwa, Ampo) is really good.

There are only **three items** in the menu—LTR, crispy pork, and pig. They are all good, with their own character of vinegar dipping sauce. My favorite is LTR.

It helps in the

CACS Recreational Courses July 2009

July 11 (9:00) – Pinatisan Ni Nanding 2
Let Chef Nanding make short work of fish with pinatisan & sinigang! You will learn: Tuna Pinatisan, Pinatisan Monterey, Pinatisan Pompanos, Pinatisan Mixed Seafood and Sinigang Combination. Fee: P1,750 Time: 10-3pm

July 18 (9:00) – Chinese Made Made Easy Workshop 1
Let Asian Cuisine Chef Adrian Lim guide you on this fun, step by step workshop where you will learn: Steamed Pork Dumplings with Fry Fish Roe, Sweet Corn Soup with Chinese Lobster, Crispy Spareribs with Honeymoon Sauce, Steamed Rice, Wok Fried Chicken with Assorted 3 Cashew Nuts, Fried Rice with Diced Chicken & Bacon, Steamed Fish with Pecan and Mushrooms. Fee: 2,500 Time: – 3pm

July 25 (9:00) – Sausage Workshop 2
Let Chef Dave teach you different homemade sausages in this very lucrative workshop. Sweet Italian Sausage, Marinating Sausage, Roasted Sausage, Grilled Sausage is covered. Pork Sausage with Sage & Roasted Garlic, Rabbit Sausage with Three Cheeses and Basil Wine, Fatso Pork Sausage with Apple and Grated Potato, Longaniza Sausage. Fee: 2,500 Time: 10am – 4pm

July 26 (9:00) – Chinese Made Made Easy Workshop 2
Let Asian Cuisine Chef Adrian Lim guide you on this easy to cook workshop where you will learn: Steamed Spareribs w/ Chicken Herbs & Rich Shrimp, Hot & Sour Soup, Crispy Fried Chicken Fillet with Shrimp Mousse in Orange Sauce, Steamed Seafood in Superior Oyster Sauce, Fried Rice with Seafood and Dried Scallops & Eggwhite, Asian Gold w/ Mushrooms & Bamboo Fish in Oyster Sauce. Fee: 2,500 Time: – 4pm

July 19 & 26 (9:00) – Certificate Program in Cooking & Baking Skills: Nanding Program
This hands-on series is intended for kitchen enthusiasts and aspiring consultants and will be limited to 10 students. Classes are once a week, from 9am to 4pm. Enrollment includes 1 set of chef's uniform, manual, chef's kit, and all the ingredients throughout the course.
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Lecture series on areas of basic kitchen skills, meat, fish, poultry and seafood fabrication, vegetables, pastas & other basics accompaniments and internationally accepted standards for baking. Menu planning and time appreciation is also part of this program. Fee includes all ingredients, manuals, chef's uniform and a chef kit! Only P55,000!

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Q: WHAT IS ULTRASHAPE?
A: It's the first ever fat-melting treatment without pain or surgery. Dubbed "The Fat Destroyer," Ultrashape shrinks the fats on your tummy, hips and thighs by at least 2cm in just one session!

Q: HOW DOES ULTRASHAPE WORK?
A: Ultrashape works by focusing ultrasound waves from outside the body to the targeted areas. It selectively breaks down fat cells, while ensuring that the surrounding tissues are unaffected. The body then naturally metabolizes the liquefied fat released from the fat cells, giving you results quickly and reshaping your figure instantly!

Q: WHAT RESULTS CAN WOMEN GET FROM ULTRASHAPE?
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Q: WHO ARE THE CANDIDATES FOR ULTRASHAPE?
A: Women with tummy bulges, protruding pouch, flanks, love handles, huge outer thighs (saddlebags) or stubborn areas even after their weight-loss programmes.

Q: HOW LONG DOES ULTRASHAPE TAKE?
A: Ultrashape is a "Lunch Hour Body Contouring Treatment." In just 2 hours or less – the treatment is done!

Q: IS THERE ANY DOWNTIME?
A: None. Have it done during your lunch break or spare time and then go back to your usual activities right after the treatment. It's that easy and simple!

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BIKO MACHINE

HOROSCOPE

BY FRANCIS DRAKE

CROSSWORD PUZZLE

CONCEPTIS SU DOKU

Conceptis Sudoku

			1		5			
		9	2		7	1		
	6						9	
3	5						7	8
8	4						6	9
	8						2	
		2	9		1	3		
			6		4			

Difficulty Level: ★★★

HOW TO PLAY SU DOKU

Fill the grid so that every column, every row and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1 to 9.

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Answer to previous puzzle

5	6	8	9	4	7	1	3	2
7	1	2	6	8	3	4	9	5
9	4	3	5	1	2	6	7	8
1	3	9	8	2	5	7	6	4
2	5	4	1	7	6	3	8	9
6	8	7	4	3	9	5	2	1
5	2	6	7	5	1	9	4	3
4	7	5	3	9	8	2	1	6
3	9	1	2	6	4	8	5	7

'Dinuguan' with 'sampalok' leaves and other come-ons in Bulacan

ABP LORNA Silverio

SQUASH blossom with shrimps from La Familia

From page C1

Kalasi, Bulacan, when I ate at midday meal, I ask our cook to prepare sardines, sautéed with lots of thin strips of ginger with sabong ng sampalok or alibangbang leaves, whichever is available. Alibangbang trees are found in the mountains of Bulacan.

Another favorite is stingray's fin, deboned and steamed to gelatin, onions and tomatoes with sampalok leaves.

I love also my own ginger tea blend. The outside is beef fore, slow sautéed in garlic, onion, tomatoes, bits of ginger and alagao leaves.

LUCBAN from Edison's Lugaw-an

TOKNEJT bakap from Edison's Lugaw-an

Email the author at magsaysay@inquirer.com.ph

Roasted, barbecue spareribs

MEATY SIDE IN MONTEREY Meatships are galvanized flesh and only because they have been chilled through a blast chilling process right after slaughter so bacterial growth is neutralized and freshness is locked in. Here are recipes from Monterey.

Standing Rib Roast

- 4 kg whole Monterey Standing Rib Roast
- 1 c coarsely cracked black peppercorns
- 1/3c coarsely cracked white peppercorns
- 1 tbsp ground coriander
- 2 tbsp dried red chili flakes
- ¼ cup brown sugar
- ¼ cup salt
- Hot Chi au jus:
- ½ c Magnolia Gold Butter, unsalted
- ¼ c flour
- Two drippings from the roast
- 4 c chicken broth
- Salt to taste
- Ground black pepper to taste

Trim Monterey Standing Rib Roast of excess fats and pat dry with paper towels.

In a bowl, combine all ingredients for the rub. Rub until done coat the entire Monterey Standing Rib Roast with the rub mixture.

Chill the meat (covered) in the refrigerator at least overnight for the flavors to be absorbed by the meat.

Preheat oven to 350°F. In a roasting rack lined with clean pan, roast meat in oven for 3-4 hours. To check when the meat is done, use an instant read thermometer. Rich thermometer on the thickest section of the meat. Internal temperature should read about 140-145°F. The meat should be served medium.

Place meat in a large wooden cutting board. Reserve the pan drippings from the roast.

STANDING Rib Roast

To make the au jus:

In a saucepan, melt butter and mix in the flour. Whisk as you add the flour to avoid lumps and burning. Add the pan drippings together with the broth and mix well. If mixture is too thick, adjust by adding some more broth or water until desired thickness is achieved. Season sauce with salt and pepper, then serve together with the Monterey Standing Rib Roast.

Honey Barbecue Spareribs

- 2½ kg Monterey fresh baby back ribs, cut into serving
- 2 tbsp lemon juice
- 2 tbsp honey
- 2 tbsp Magnolia Sunflower Oil
- 1 tbsp soy sauce
- 1 tbsp onion powder
- 1 tsp paprika
- 1 tsp salt
- 2 tbsp brown sugar
- ½ cup dried oregano
- ½ cup garlic powder

Place ribs, bone side down, on a wire rack in a shallow roasting pan. Roast at 350°F for 30 minutes. Drain all excess oils. Set aside.

In a glass bowl, combine all the remaining ingredients. Brush some of the glaze on the ribs. Roast, uncovered for 20 minutes then brush the ribs again with the glaze. Roast for another 15 minutes.

Brush some of the glaze to the ribs before serving.

HONEY Barbecue Spareribs

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A Country Built by NutriJuice

Everyday a Struggle

School was just today. It didn't rain but the two kilometers that Julio walked to get there was still something to contend with. Fogbut was another story altogether. Try as he might, he just could not drown out the sound of his hungry stomach with the teacher's drone on verbs. Recess time involved nothing more than a small piece of bread, albeit lovingly packed for him by his mother. Rice was for going to get through mathematics class? What are multiplication tables to an empty stomach?

This story may seem dramatic, but it is definitely real. This is the daily plight of millions of Julios all over the Philippines. The reasons are many: poverty for one. But the result is always the same: poor nutrition equates to poor physical and mental growth of children, the future leaders of the country.

The Creation of NutriJuice

It's from this dilemma that one solution was born. Coca-Cola Philippines collaborated with the Food and Nutrition Research Institute of the Department of Science and Technology (FNRI-DOST) to create NutriJuice. It is an orange juice drink bottled with iron, zinc, lysine and vitamins A and C to help combat the prevalence of iron deficiency anemia (IDA).

According to the 2003 National Nutrition Survey (NNS) of the FNRI-DOST, 37.4% of children aged 6-12 years old are afflicted with iron-deficiency anemia (IDA). This results from lack of iron in the body and leads to poor physical and mental development, the manifestations of which are sluggishness, lack of attention and energy. With NutriJuice, Coca-Cola aims to assist in bringing life and energy to Filipino schoolchildren by providing them minerals and vitamin supplements which may fulfill their mental, physical and growth.

The Power of the Juice

Armed with a product that could potentially create a positive difference for children, Coca-Cola and FNRI-DOST sought to test the efficacy of NutriJuice. In 2007, 237 children in Pinagbarilan Elementary School, San Juan, Batangas were given NutriJuice for 150 feeding days. The results were just a little short of astounding. From 100% anemia levels at the beginning of the study, it was reduced to 13% at the end. Furthermore, the height and weight of the students also significantly improved during the course of the study.

With the efficacy test in tow, Coca-Cola sought to spread the juice to Filipino schoolchildren. In 2008, NutriJuice was launched to benefit 3,000 schoolchildren in the Southern province of Quirino. In the 2008 NNS study, Quirino had a provincial estimate for IDA. Quirino was identified as having one of the highest rates of IDA (prevalence among children aged 6 months to less than 5 years old, which is conclusively due to subsistence

Students in Quirino province during the 2008 implementation of NutriJuice: looked forward to receiving their juice every day

diet). Thus, Coca-Cola and FNRI-DOST embarked a 120-day feeding program involving 15 elementary schools.

It's the Facelessness of Hunger

The unfortunate reality is that children in extreme areas have a difficult time mustering the energy needed to perform in school. There are sad stories and then there are really sad stories in Quirino. What's important to note in this instance is that a few months into the implementation of the project, attendance in up and teachers are appreciative of the new found eagerness in students.

NutriJuice was also distributed to 1,000 schoolchildren in Bagong Silangan Elementary School in Quezon City. Though within a prosperous city, most students of Bagong Silangan were still senitive. It not the same conditions as those in Quirino. Hunger, malnutrition, and the inner city, areas of Manila and Taguig, 30,000, may be a small number compared to the millions of kids who are also in need of this project. It is however a second step forward.

This is where you come in. You have heard the raw stories, and the tales of success. You can make a difference, even in a small way. You can help bring NutriJuice to every child in the country. The Coca-Cola Foundation accepts donations of all amounts for the project and is looking for partners willing to bring this dream to life. You may call the Foundation through 367-7-627-0000 or 886-2063. Help spread the juice.

Our Lady of Piat Mass at Club Filipino

The Piat Legacy Foundation, headed by Mrs. Irenejulio Matibitis, president, invites Manila devotees of Our Lady of Piat to a special Mass today at 6 p.m. at the Club Filipino. Msgr. Leonardo Ilarde Cabrera, parish priest of Immaculate Conception Cathedral in Cubao, July 2 is the feast day of Our Lady of Piat, powerful patroness and miraculous healing intercessor of Cagayan Valley. "Ama Tan Higante" (Ibanag for "Mother of Jesus") is one of the oldest Marian images brought by the Dominicans in 1604 from Malacca to Cagayan Valley. Mrs. Matibitis, Rebelio Caballero, executive vice president, and Jeannette Chua, secretary, will host a dinner after the Mass.

Anniversary raffle

InterContinental Manila celebrates its 40th anniversary from April 16, 2009-April 15, 2010. To mark this event, the hotel will hold a grand raffle of trips to dream destinations. May dine or cook an event at the hotel during the anniversary year celebration and get a chance to win any of these prizes: Princess Cruises trip for two to Alaska or the Caribbean or Mexican Riviera, or a round-trip ticket from Manila to a European destination of your choice within the KLM Royal Dutch Airlines network. A raffle coupon will be issued for every P4,000 purchase to a single receipt at any hotel restaurant outlet, while every one-night stay at a qualifying rate of P4,000++ will likewise earn a raffle ticket. Every P40,000 spent in a single banquet, meeting or event at the hotel will merit one raffle ticket. For raffle mechanics, see related product and flyers.

Meanwhile, "Get 4 at 40" deals is available. Saturdays and Sundays until April 16, 2010.

For every two buffet paying adults at Café Jacques, a fifth person gets a free buffet meal.

Savor a four-course dinner for two at the Prince Albert Rotisserie inclusive of a bottle of house wine for only P4,000.

Stay in a deluxe room at the special rate of P10,000 per night.

Stay for three consecutive nights and get the fourth night free. (Bonus night is applicable for Monday after a consecutive three-night stay commencing Friday.)

The packaged room rates are valid only for local residents and are subject to prevailing taxes and service charge. Room deals are subject to room availability.

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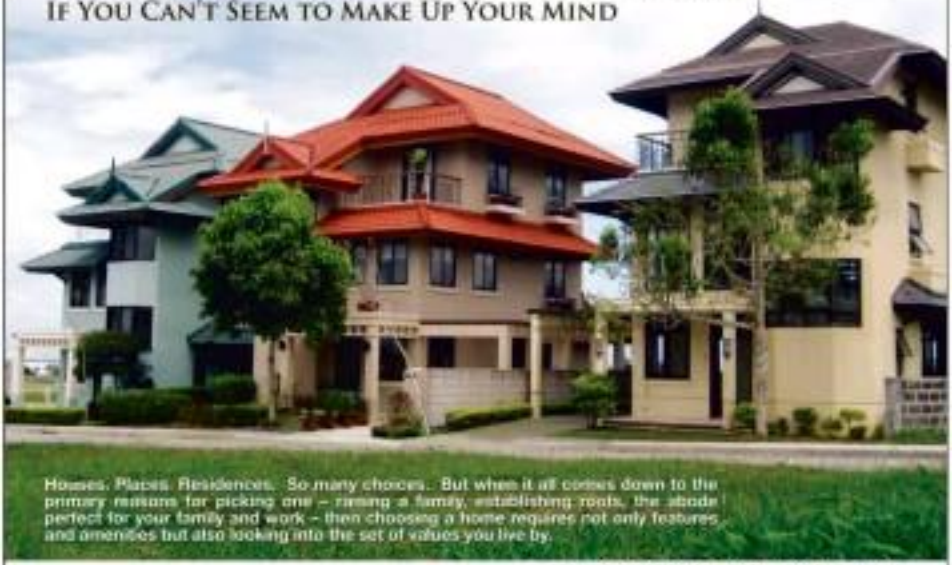

Houses. Places. Residences. So many choices. But when it all comes down to the primary reasons for picking one – raising a family, establishing roots, the abode perfect for your family and work – then choosing a home requires not only features and amenities but also looking into the set of values you live by.

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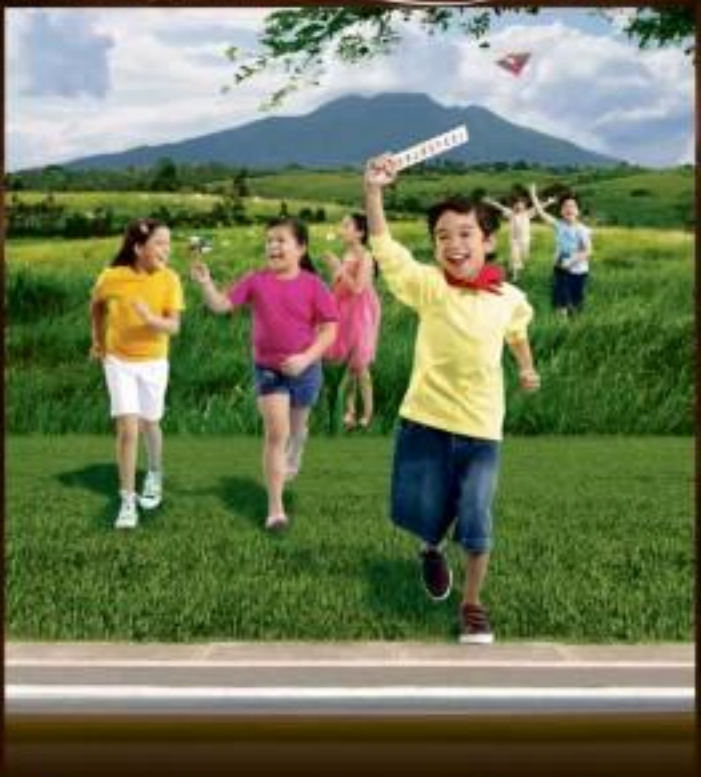

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Tonkatsu

Sizzling Pepper Steak offers Chicken Spiral, Tori Karaage, Chicken Katsu Tonkatsu, Sizzler Tonkatsu, Katsuo-zuke Fillet, Sizzling Pepper Steak is at Greenhills, 2/F, Festival Supermall, Alabang. Call 8583114.

Roasted meats

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The Kebab Factory serves Cheese Samosa, Beef Kebab, Chicken Tikka, Seekh Kebab, Chicken Mint Kebab, Roasted Boneless Chicken, Saffron Fish Kebab, Onion and Tomato Salad and Veggie Samosa. The Kebab Factory is at 2/F, Atrium, SM Megamall, Mandaluyong. Call (02) 7-0000000

Beef 'kare-kare'

Conge Grille's Texas Steak branch offers Pork Sisig, Sizzling Pepper Steak, Beef Kare-Kare, Pinakbet, Pork Barbecue, Cashew Gratinglon Calamari, Crackly Fried Chicken, Conge Mango and Kare Pandan. The restaurant also has appetizers, seafood steaks, specialty drinks, desserts and native food. Call 3323150-66.

The Secret's In The Sauce

Chef Marvin Aurbuntog, Executive Food Consultant, Asian Cuisine, InterContinental Manila, brought with him a chef's secret which was a marvelous blend of flavors with an outstanding savor. It's a culinary privilege from international hotel to taste such as Marinara Oriental, Marvin and Pesto Sauce. Today, Chef Marvin has developed experience on some tastes that aren't chili sweet out.

Filipinos may stand out from other Asian countries with our penchant for sauces. From their subdesign combination of color, we sauces, lingering to western counterparts of gravy and tomato sauce. There is no end to the many ways to which we enjoy our food with the underlying flavors complemented by the accompanying sauces. BUT NOT ALL SAUCES ARE MADE EQUAL AND AS FOODSERVICE OPERATORS, IT IS ABOUT TIME FOR US TO PAY ATTENTION TO THE RIGHT SAUCE THAT WILL GO HARMONIOUSLY WITH OUR DISHES.

A sauce can either complement or provide contrast to the flavors of the dish. But more importantly, sauces are placed as a dish to enhance flavor. For instance, chefs at times add color for presentation purposes. In addition, a good, tasty, moisture and added richness to a dish, while introducing complementary and counterpoint flavors.

Good balance of flavors is very important. That is one of the main reasons why you decide to use a sauce in the first place. Consistency and visual impact of the sauce are also key points to consider.

On the other hand, the saving sauce may lead to destroying the dish's quality. CO does not highlight the intended flavor. Letting our tastes and experiments can be very "costly" and can sometimes compromise the consistency and quality.

Fortunately, Unilever Foodsolutions now boasts of an extensive mayonnaise sauce line that is very useful to many food establishments. **Knorr Buko Glaze** and **Kenny Rogers** are some of the frequently used products, offering food operators flavor consistency and eliminating time-consuming procedures to produce a tasty, high quality sauce. The end result – a perfectly executed sauce that can increase productivity efficiency.

For food operators, Knorr Buko Glaze is the most convenient sauce to use. As a bottled sauce, having it on hand makes it easier to make different versions of the base sauce. It is the ideal accompaniment for steak and served items, providing added depth with its infusion of roast beef, red wine and mirepoix (celery, carrots and onion). It is also very versatile in cooking a rich roasted peppercorn, resulting in a simple yet tasty peppercorn sauce perfect for steaks.

Creating just the right sauce for your food operation can be a challenge but you need not worry. Unilever, as your solutions leader in taste, is able to help you find that perfect balance with your dishes and our sauces. From presenting the right sauce mix, to recipe creation and execution and cooking devices, we can help you offer the right sauce and dish combination your customers want and propel you to long lasting food success.

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Aljur postpones Asian concerts on flu fears

POP SINGER ALJUR ABRENICA HAS POSTPONED HIS CONCERTS IN the Philippines, China and Malaysia until later this year because of concerns over swine flu, organizers said Tuesday. The Senegalese-American performer will tour Asia from Oct. 23 to Nov. 7 starting in Manila, said Luke Dunlavy, managing director of Winning Touch, one of the local sponsors. The concert in Manila was originally scheduled for July 4. AP

'Katrina, Aljur deserve a break'

Kapuso president stands by the network's beleaguered stars

By Bayani San Diego Jr.

CEBU CITY—SPEAKING TO THE LOCAL press, Felipe L. Gozon, chair, president and chief executive officer of GMA 7, defended the network's talents Katrina Halili and Aljur Abrenica who are currently embroiled in sex scandals.

Halili's sex video with eccentric surgeon Hayden Kho was leaked on the Internet and distributed through burned DVDs. Abrenica was slapped with a sexual harassment suit by a minor.

Gozon said he sympathized with Halili. "What happened to Katrina was scalar. The worst of its kind. She just fell in love. Why punish her for that? At least now, she knows that what happened was wrong."

Halili was recently tapped to play the centerstyle in the upcoming soap opera "Kambalita."

The basis for letting Halili star was competence, not her involvement in a controversy, Gozon explained. "Why deprive her of projects? Katrina is a good centerstyle. The past shows where she played the villainess ("Inanna," "Starstruck") were top-notch."

He said the network is fully behind Halili in her quest for justice. "We are not a law office, but we are supporting her, morally. She believe she's the aggrieved party, and she has every right to complain."

Gozon issued a memorandum to network employees, instructing them not to download the sex videos from the Net.

He said he followed Abrenica's case with great interest, too. "I didn't get to talk to Aljur because he left for the United States. But I asked our people to investigate the matter and when I read the report ... as a lawyer I know Aljur didn't do anything wrong."

But if it's a patron quarrel, like that of executive Wilma Galvante and manager Annabelle Rama, he refuses to meddle.

"If you know them alone, they're able to resolve matters themselves. But if one of our talents gets involved in a lawsuit with executives, I take a look into it."

The head of the Kapuso channel aims to be an "approachable and transparent" leader.

He said he traveled to Cebu because he wanted to strengthen the network's position in the regions.

That's why GMA 7 is courting Cebuanos, he said. "We're doing it, not only by promoting our shows, but also by extending the Kapuso brand of public service."

The Kapuso fete day, held in SM City Cebu last Saturday, not only honored network stars, but also lauded the provincial various services from agencies like the National Bureau of Investigation, Philfirefo, the Commission on Elections, the Department of Health and the National Statistics Office.

"We'll deprive her of projects? Katrina is a good centerstyle," says GMA 7 president and chief executive officer Felipe L. Gozon. AP PHOTO

MARCO Abrenica

'Pitik Bulag' rated 'A'

By Marinel R. Cruz

"PITIK BULAG," A FILM ABOUT a man's sudden spate of good luck, has received an "A" rating from the Cinema Evaluation Board for its "highly serious society" and "excellent" direction by Gil Portes.

The movie, written by Ben Bautista and featuring Marco Alcaraz, Mercy Sevi and newcomer Nikki Mia, opened in local theaters yesterday. An "A" rating entitles it to a 100 percent rebates.

"The direction is excellent, very well in control of characters, actions and setting," said acting chair Dindo Arambulo, casting assistant. CEB chair Christine Tayzon was abroad during the CEB screening.

"It's a tightly woven story with social commentary and redemptive human values dramatically done," said another CEB board member.

The CEB board also commended Palomo, Alcaraz and Sevi for their performances.

"Pitik Bulag" revolves around Angelo (Alcaraz), a downtrodden movie scriptwriter who stumbles upon millions of pesos taken from a bank heist.

According to Portes, the film is loosely based on the 2006 bank robbery in Laguna in May 2006.

The movie's cast will have a meet-and-greet session on July 4, 5 p.m., at Robinsons Galleria in Pasig City.

REVIEW

4 divas captivate Dallas

Text and photo by Alex T. Vergara

BILLED AS "MUSIC REVUSH" IN THE making, the two-hour spectacle dubbed "Divas/Divas" reportedly took its organizers to the United States four years of negotiations before it could be staged.

And judging from the packed crowd's bumper mood at the Dallas Convention Center's Black Arts and Lovers Theater, the recent Texas leg of the concert's Multi-American tour seemed worth all that wait.

Prior to the star-night musical showdown, Rob Ledesma, Regine Velasquez, Hope Arvanitakis and Diana Dalilla have been quietly making the 10-hr weeks, packing in crowds in Dallas, Washington D.C. and San Diego, among others.

Some observations: halfway through the Dallas show Regine seems forever "unmotivated" to hit the high notes; Rob's voice remains as primitive as ever; Diana is a direct cousin and...surprise, surprise...Hope, given the right material, is able to hold her own against some of the country's most formidable belters.

Regine obviously had the most number of star-turns. Apart from a solo spot and joining several group numbers, she did a series of duets with every fellow diva. She was on

"DIVA/DIVA/DIVA" stars Pops Fernandez, Diana Padilla, Regine Velasquez and Rob Ledesma

LEFTOVER 21

Winning P10 million is harder than it looks

VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Torre

WHEN PEOPLE JOIN GAME AND QUIZ shows on TV, they want to make as much money as possible in the shortest time, and in the easiest way. Well, that just about sums up what "Power of 10" on GMA 7 (Saturdays after "Eagle Amazing Videos") has to offer. Minimum winnings of P10 million in just five "easy" steps!

To win, the contestant has to successfully guess the results of surveys of what the public at large feels and thinks about a wide range of topics and issues. As the contestant answers the series of queries on a percentage basis, the margin of error unquestionably shrinks, from an initial 40 percent, to 30, down the line. Correspondingly, the prize money increases exponentially from P1,000 to P10,000, P100,000, P1 million—up to the mind-blowing P10 million top prize!

The night we caught the show hosted by Jaime Gilbe, the first pair of contestants were BB Gandanghari and John Lapus. Decked up in all their cross-dressing glory, they answered some preliminary questions, BB moved into the competition proper, and started answering the "real" questions to eager anticipations of sweeping off with all those millions.

Alas, it didn't happen. All BB got for his/her pains was P1,000. So, doing well on "Power of 10" is by no means as easy as it looked.

Still, the show offers "collateral" benefits. The viewers learning about what Filipinos generally feel and think about different topics. After a while, however, we sometimes wonder if the people pulled by the show are truly representative of the general population. For example, there was a surprisingly low percentage point for a query on Filipinos who shaved their armpits.

Another problem is the prize to tele-

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1 TRANSFORMERS: Revenge of the Fallen
2 TRANSFORMERS: Revenge of the Fallen
3 DRAG ME TO HELL
4 TERMINATOR: SALVATION
5 TRANSFORMERS: Revenge of the Fallen
6 TRANSFORMERS: Revenge of the Fallen
7 Andadima: BOSE
8 PITIK BULAG
9 VILLA ESTRELLA
10 THE TAKING OF PELHAM 123

ERMITA

1 TRANSFORMERS: Revenge of the Fallen
2 TRANSFORMERS: Revenge of the Fallen
3 TRANSFORMERS: Revenge of the Fallen
4 TRANSFORMERS: Revenge of the Fallen
5 VILLA ESTRELLA
6 TRANSFORMERS: Revenge of the Fallen
7 PITIK BULAG

METRO EAST

1 TRANSFORMERS: Revenge of the Fallen
2 TRANSFORMERS: Revenge of the Fallen
3 TRANSFORMERS: Revenge of the Fallen
4 TRANSFORMERS: Revenge of the Fallen
5 DRAG ME TO HELL
6 THE TAKING OF PELHAM 123
7 NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM 2
8 VILLA ESTRELLA

NOVALICHES

1 THE TAKING OF PELHAM 123
2 TRANSFORMERS: Revenge of the Fallen
3 TRANSFORMERS: Revenge of the Fallen
4 VILLA ESTRELLA

PIONEER

1 TRANSFORMERS: Revenge of the Fallen
2 TRANSFORMERS: Revenge of the Fallen
3 TRANSFORMERS: Revenge of the Fallen
4 TRANSFORMERS: Revenge of the Fallen

STA. ROSA

1 DRAG ME TO HELL
2 TRANSFORMERS: Revenge of the Fallen
3 TRANSFORMERS: Revenge of the Fallen
4 VILLA ESTRELLA

LIPA

1 TRANSFORMERS: Revenge of the Fallen
2 HOUSE
3 TRANSFORMERS: Revenge of the Fallen
4 VILLA ESTRELLA

DASMARIÑAS

1 DRAG ME TO HELL
2 KAMASUTRA NIGHTS
3 TRANSFORMERS: Revenge of the Fallen
4 VILLA ESTRELLA

IMUS

1 DRAG ME TO HELL
2 KAMASUTRA NIGHTS
3 TRANSFORMERS: Revenge of the Fallen
4 VILLA ESTRELLA

STARMILLS

1 TRANSFORMERS: Revenge of the Fallen
2 DRAG ME TO HELL
3 TRANSFORMERS: Revenge of the Fallen
4 VILLA ESTRELLA
5 HOUSE
6 TRANSFORMERS: Revenge of the Fallen

ANGELES

1 TRANSFORMERS: Revenge of the Fallen
2 HOUSE
3 TRANSFORMERS: Revenge of the Fallen
4 VILLA ESTRELLA

TACLOBAN

1 TRANSFORMERS: Revenge of the Fallen
2 TRANSFORMERS: Revenge of the Fallen
3 TRANSFORMERS: Revenge of the Fallen

BACOLOD

1 TRANSFORMERS: Revenge of the Fallen
2 TRANSFORMERS: Revenge of the Fallen
3 TRANSFORMERS: Revenge of the Fallen
4 VILLA ESTRELLA
5 THE COFFIN
6 RESERVE

ILOILO

1 TRANSFORMERS: Revenge of the Fallen
2 TRANSFORMERS: Revenge of the Fallen
3 TRANSFORMERS: Revenge of the Fallen
4 VILLA ESTRELLA
5 THE COFFIN
6 DRAG ME TO HELL

The metamorphosis of Luis Alandy

By Oliver M. Palardoni
Contributor

ACTOR LUIS ALANDY HAS BEEN IN THE business for 12 years, so he has seen many roles change and age with him in that span.

"Fortunately, I still keep getting good parts. I love acting," he said.

From 2000 to 2006, he regularly appeared in the ABS-CBN dramas "Sargado as Sy" and "Sa Dulo ng Walang Hanggan." He was in fog-screen comedies like "Mister Pi," and the horror flick "Scream ng Desperadas." He also landed parts in a couple of GMA TV shows.

The 28-year-old actor is currently appearing in GMA's afternoon soap "Tigapuso at Kalaban," based on the 1992 movie that starred Sharon Cuneta and Richard Gomez. Alandy plays a scheming bartender, a character originally portrayed by Mark Gil.

Describe how acting in the big networks' shows contributed to your growth.

ABS-CBN helped develop my confidence. GMA gave me more chances as opposed on what I've learned.

Did you dream of becoming an actor as a kid?

I wanted to join 'Eat TV' when I was a kid. But growing up, I wanted to be a basketball player.

What's the toughest thing about doing TV dramas?

It's different here. For a soaping, you're required to be there for more than 24 hours. Three or four times a week. Sometimes you don't get a chance to be with your family.

In your 12 years of acting, which project was the hardest?

It's the stage play that I did, 'All About Men.' We were required to act while sweating, hitch only. Stage was always been difficult. Take-to-ing, unlike when you do TV, pumasling i-edit. And the player given to me was a 15 page monologue.

How closely are you with exes?

I don't feel like I would give justice to a role. Ung all. Magkaroon ng issue future, ha'i kovan throughout. Ung "Mister Pi 2," at the time, Regal was only offering me guy roles. I think I'm already given justice to that role. I also had a gay role in "Desperadas."

What have you learned about the business, so far?

In these biz, you don't know the longevity of your career. You have to save for your future. Also, it's important not to learn budgets valuations, it's a small business, and if you keep improving your craft, people will recognize it.

4 divas . . .

From page D1

range roughly 10 percent of the time.

Rob seemed to have purposely yielded the spotlight to Regine, whose ability to embroil divas in hungry Pinoys in "Bisa Ang Balita" "Kahangan ko'y Ikaw" and "Somerby" is rumored remembered.

Contrasting styles

"Sino Ang Baliw," Regine's duet with Rob, was memorable as it showcased the two singers' contrasting styles. The interpretation reached down pitch to the song's last few notes as Regine screeched her lungs out, while Rob, with her much lower but more solid voice, channeled Grace Nono.

Regine, if she will herself, could still reach an orchestra up/Beyond without sounding like a diva. Her duet with Pops on "If I Were a Boy" was a refreshing detour; She could have easily commanded. Pops, less inverted shone to play it cute and sexy.

No pushover

Pops, to her credit, was no pushover on the emotional R&B stinks and counted along smoothly without running a beat.

Zsazsa had her moments when she sang her trademark tune "Ulitsa." Her strong voice proved to be a versatile counterpoint when she squared off with an insecure Regine ("Notes of No Return") and later with a cool Rob ("The Diaspo").

Comic timing

Without trying to, Zsazsa had clearly established longtime partner Dolphy's comic timing with her witty off-the-cuff one-liners. Sample: She said she couldn't hide the fact that she's 43 because she didn't want people to call Dolphy, now 81, a "cradle snatcher."

In summary, Regine's belabored and ruinding attempts at comedy were almost too painful to bear. But while she surely made a fool of herself with contrived attempts at self-deprecation and double entendres, Rob was disarmingly **proudly espousing her Division beliefs.**

She climbed the Lord at every opportunity—those her ability to live life independently found, encouraged in her refusal to go under the knife for beauty's sake.

Singular such qualities, "Divas/Divas" were more influenced to the world the exceptional talents of Pinay singers.

It was clearly into hell of a delightful experience for every music lover regardless of nationality, allegiance, color, civil status, and, yes, faith.

TV series revives 'Agimat' legend

By Marinel R. Cruz

IMUS PRODUCTIONS, a film outfit founded by Ramon Revilla Sr., has tied up with ABS-CBN for a TV series about the superhuman character that the former action star popularized in the '70s, Kapamilya Insider announced last week.

Invincible powers

The network recently revealed the roster of three actors who will portray Revilla in his most popular characters—many of whom acquired incredible powers through a sacred ring (Amalayi).

Jolo Revilla will play Elias in the TV adaptation of the 1980 film "Elias at Espiritu ng Pinili." Gerald Anderson will reprise the legendary Thyogong Aleyar (1973), while Coco Martin will reprise the role of Tayong Bantay (1979).

SUPERHUMAN CHARACTERS: Jolo Revilla, Gerald Anderson, Jake Cuenca and Coco Martin

The action-adventure series, titled "Agimat," airs in August, said Rowell Limdaop, exec-ad in charge of the project's department.

"It took two long years for this deal to be finalized. We're happy that the network was able to set an airing date," Limdaop said in an interview with Philippine Entertainment Portal (PEP).

Buddy is very pleased," said director Rovil Nacianceno. "I thought he's happy to see the result of the project he's been working on for the past two years."

Nacianceno said the series is scheduled to air